

EEC best for Britain and the world — Mr Wilson

Prime Minister declared himself last night to be firmly in favour of the EEC. Britain's continued membership, he told a Labour Party rally in Cambridge, "is best for the future of Britain, best for the Commonwealth, best for Europe, best for the developing world, and best for the wider world."

Referendum 'gives the people sovereignty'

George Clark, Political Correspondent

In his first important speech to the House of Commons since the renegotiated terms of Britain's membership of the European Community, the Prime Minister said last night that he did not intend to call a referendum on the future of Britain, for the Commonwealth, for Europe, best for the developing world, and best for the wider world.

Addressing a Labour Party rally in Cambridge, he added that the referendum means that it is not enough for any politician to say that he believes in it. In this case, it must be for the people to decide what is best for the mass of the people, and their children.

A speech which pro-Europeans will regard as one of the most important declarations Mr Wilson has made in favour of the Community, he said that sovereignty, undivided, was a great issue. He said of the sovereignty of the United Kingdom, and of the people, and added that in a referendum, the people would be asked to decide whether they wanted to remain in the Community, or whether they wanted to leave it.

Mr Wilson, like Mr Wedg Benn, the Secretary of State for Industry, the previous Conservative leader, had said that the decision to stay in the Community was a decision to be made by the people, and that the Government would be guided by the people's decision.

He said that the Labour Government and his party, and his party, were being consistently blacklisted by the press and self-appointed spokesmen of the establishment for the very fact that they were giving the British people the right to decide. That was regardless of the fact that the Government was committed to accepting their decision.

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Insurance companies challenge new Bill

By Anthony Rowley, Financial Staff

Immediately after publication of the Government's controversial Insurance Companies Bill in the House of Commons yesterday, the insurance industry declared its "strong opposition" to the proposed legislation.

Mr Aonghus Macdonald, chairman of the British Insurance Association, indicated that the Bill, particularly those relating to the rescue of companies in difficulties, would be fought at every stage in its passage through Parliament.

The insurance industry expects the support of many Labour MPs as well as of the TUC General Council and a number of individual unions in opposing parts of the Bill. Lord Allan, general secretary of the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers, has written to Mr Peter Shore, Secretary of State for Trade, asking him to reconsider the whole principle of statutory policyholder protection.

Commenting on the Bill at a press conference yesterday, Mr Shore claimed that it would not lead to higher insurance premiums. But in a joint statement afterwards the British Insurance Association and the Life Association claimed that the costs of rescuing policyholders or companies must be reflected in premium.

Mr Shore called the Bill a "most important advance in the field of consumer protection, affecting the most important means of saving in this country" through insurance policies. It was complementary to the growing supervision of the Government, already exercising over insurance companies in an endeavour to see that they did not "behave irresponsibly" in the future.

The background to the Bill was the Government's desire to meet the justifiable public concern that failed and more effective arrangements should be set up for the protection of policyholders in the event of insurance companies going into liquidation.

Despite encouragement from the Government, the insurance industry had been unable to agree on a satisfactory statutory scheme. A statutory scheme was the only means of restoring public confidence in the industry, he claimed.

A five-member statutory body, to be called the Policyholders' Protection Board, would be set up with majority representation from the insurance industry, though continued on page 17, col 4.

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Sour Congress reaction to plea for more Saigon aid

From Fred Emery, Washington, April 11

Rejection and incredulity dominated Congressional reactions to President Ford's urgent appeal last night for \$1,000m (about \$400m) and emergency authority, in effect, to negotiate or fight America's way out of South Vietnam for the last time.

Mr Ford asked for quick action with a Congressional answer by April 15, but today neither the House of Representatives nor the Senate bothered to sit. His main point was to avert "deeper disaster" — a nightmare that he did not sketch out. However, the worst case envisaged at high level here would be Americans fighting off both communist and non-communist Vietnamese in the final collapse.

In fact, it was confirmed at high level last night that the reduction of the 6,000 American troops in Vietnam has already begun — with caution being observed not to precipitate a collapse of morale among the South Vietnamese.

What is hoped for at best is a negotiation with the communists that might provide some political settlement. No hope is held out for Saigon's military resistance. During that negotiation it is hoped that there would be a breathing space to organize a mass evacuation.

Also foreseen is a negotiation with the South Vietnamese Government to ensure the orderly evacuation of up to 200,000 Vietnamese to whom the Americans feel a special rather than an ordinary obligation. The latter are estimated to be at least 1,500,000 people, but this is stated to be beyond American capabilities.

Most of the Vietnamese evacuees will be resettled here. In the event that neither process proves orderly, Mr Ford wants new authority to use American troops and air power to protect both the American and South Vietnamese he will then seek to evacuate.

The Administration believes that under the 1973 law — prohibiting in, over or off Vietnam, Laos or Cambodia, any American combat activities — it does possess residual constitutional authority to engage in hostilities to protect American lives. But it accepts it may not do the same for foreigners.

Given the sensitivity of the circumstances, it is seeking both an assertion that it may order troops in for rescuing Americans, and an explicit revision of the law — with limitations of time and purpose stated — to rescue the Vietnamese. Congressional reaction on this second point is exceedingly wary.

The widespread interpretation of commentators, briefed by high officials, that Mr Ford is engaged in a charade by asking for the impossible is tempered by the knowledge that he has to act with extreme caution to rescue as much as possible from the disaster.

It is conceded by those officials that the \$722m requested in military aid was chosen only because it was recommended by General Frederick Weyand, the Army Chief of Staff, who visited Vietnam recently, and because Saigon knew he would do so.

Hence its advocacy is meant to encourage Saigon psychologically. It is also insisted that Mr Ford is speaking to many audiences at once and must avoid making the situation worse.

For all that, the reaction by Congress was sour, except that agreement emerged that humanitarian aid would have to be sent.

Mr Ford asked for a first instalment of \$250m. "Oh, it's dead," said Senator Henry Jackson, the presidential contender, of the arms request.

"Simply not acceptable," said Senator Lloyd Bentsen, another Democratic presidential hopeful.

A veteran hawk, Senator John McClellan, chairman of the appropriations committee, rebuffed Mr Ford.

Further military aid could merely prolong the conflict and, perhaps, postpone briefly the inevitable, he said. A prominent dove, Senator Frank Church, feared that the equipment would merely end in the hands of the communists. On thought emerging here is that a forcefully unified Vietnam Army is going to be one of the most strongly equipped in Asia.

Those supporting the President were an apparently reluctant Senator Hugh Scott, the minority leader, who said: "I am supporting whatever he can get," and the handful of real hawks. Senator James Buckley asked whether the South Vietnamese would be given their chance, and Senator John Tower backed the full Ford request.

Reactions to that the divided Congressmen John Rhodes, the Republican minority leader, suggested that the arms had to be sent even if they might be lost to the communists.

Negotiations with the communists are somewhat surprisingly, thought here to be "probable", although no details are available.

In his address, Mr Ford reiterated his wish to cooperate with Congress. Reaction to that he divided Senator Birch Bayh said Mr Ford only asked for something Congress would have to reject in order to be able to say it was all Congress's fault, but Mr Philip Burton, chairman of the Democratic caucus in the House, did not agree that the President was trying to make a scapegoat of Congress.

Battle near Saigon and partial text of Ford speech, page 4



People in the provincial capital of Xuan Loc fleeing yesterday from fires and shellfire as North and South Vietnamese troops fought for the town, one of the outer bastions of Saigon, the South Vietnam capital. Report, page 4.

Two Conservatives on memoirs committee

By Our Political Staff

Two Conservatives are included in the seven-man committee of privy counsellors on ministerial memoirs. The chairman of the committee, which has been set up by the Prime Minister, is Lord Radcliffe, who has been a member of a number of constitutional and government inquiries in the past decade, including the committee which Mr Wilson instituted in 1967 into the Daily Express and D notices.

The two Conservative privy counsellors are Mr Francis Pym, opposition spokesman on defence, and Lord Windham, a former junior minister for Northern Ireland, who is the author of *Communication and Political Power*.

Other members of the committee are: Lord Armstrong of Sanderson, Lord Frankland, Lord Shackleton, Mr Michael Stewart, MP, a former Labour Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary.

Mr Stewart figures in a not entirely favourable light in the diaries of the late Richard Crossman, the detailed publication of which in *The Sunday Times* is a principal reason for setting up the committee.

Portuguese parties resign power to military for up to five years

From Nicholas Ashford, Lisbon, April 11

Portugal's main political parties today acknowledged formally that the country's armed forces will remain in power for the next three to five years. In a ceremony at the presidential Belem Palace representatives from six political parties signed a constitutional agreement, prepared by the Armed Forces Movement, which gives almost total power to the 28 officers in the Supreme Revolutionary Council.

The signatories were Dr Mario Soares (Socialist Party), Senator Alvaro Cunhal (Communist Party), Dr Freitas do Amaral (Centre Democratic Social Party), Dr Sá Borges (Popular Democratic Party), Dr Pereira de Moura (Portuguese Democratic Movement) and Dr Manuel Serra (Popular Socialist Party).

Five small ultra-left parties refused to sign, including the Movement of the Socialist Left, which had been expected originally to approve the document. The Popular Monarchist Party also did not sign, not because it disagreed with the pact, but because it did not want to align itself with the other signatories.

The parties' surrender to the military was presided over by President Costa Gomes and took place in the presence of the Supreme Revolutionary Council. President Costa Gomes said that the three to five-year transitional period was necessary to educate the Portuguese into the meaning and responsibilities of democracy.

Many sections of the population had not yet experienced the creative forces that democracy gives, he said. Conversely we have small minorities which are drunk with freedom.

Reactionary forces were still trying to undermine Portugal's progress towards democracy. The transitional period was necessary "to bring the situation under control and to ensure the development of a legitimate revolution".

The constitutional document virtually eliminates civilians from any decision-taking role during the transitional period and makes almost meaningless the elections for a constituent assembly due to take place on April 25.

The parties other than the Communists, who had no objections, persuaded the military to make only 12 minor amendments to the original draft.

It is not clear what will happen to the parties which failed to sign at today's ceremony. Some observers felt the armed forces might suspend them from taking part in the elections.

Political prisoners, page 4

African nations tighten squeeze on Vorster regime

DEAF his fan

talks between black and South Africa on aid and other issues, were held yesterday by the declaration of the mission of African Unity relief conference in Dar es Salaam.

But the 41 nations seated at the conference to prepare for armed conflict by guerrillas and economic measures at the Vorster regime.

The declaration reaffirms the determination of the OAU to achieve majority rule in Rhodesia, to end the South African occupation of Namibia (formerly South-West Africa) and to create a non-racial society in South Africa. The declaration made it clear that the goals in South Africa remain and that South Africa cannot buy peace by negotiating away Rhodesia and Namibia.

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Cigarette advertising curb

A code for tighter controls over cigarette advertising is likely to be approved by the Department of Health and Social Security soon. It is expected to stop advertisements which suggest that smoking is connected with health, bravery, and sexual business and social success. The

Advising Standards Authority would have the power to act as a watchdog. Smokers seen in advertisements would have to be more than 25 years of age and only half the people seen in a group could be shown smoking.

Uster: The UDA and the UVF, leading Protestant paramilitary groups, announced at a meeting yesterday that they had settled their dispute.

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Downing Street denies vetoing £1,000m Middle East arms order

By David Wood, Political Editor

Reports that British firms have been offered Libyan arms contracts worth up to £1,000m have substantial truth, although they are exaggerated. Downing Street denies that Mr Wilson vetoed the sale of arms to Libya, and the Prime Minister was at no time involved.

Our Defence Correspondent writes: The Government has already indicated that it would not grant export licences for 39 Jaguar low-level strike aircraft, worth more than £100m including spares, for the Libyan air force.

A similar negative is likely to the Libyan request for submarines for the Libyan navy which the Arabs would like from Vickers.

A statement from the Ministry of Defence said last night: "Our policy on arms sales to Libya is determined by our policy on arms sales to the Middle East and in the light of Libyan declarations of support for various organisations, including the IRA."

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Building societies and Government free on mortgage controls

Building societies and the Government have formalized their agreements for introducing restrictive controls on home loans. There has been increasing concern that the big upsurge in investment in the societies — the net receipts were a

record £274m — coupled with the pent-up demand for loans could trigger another round of house price increases. The societies will now arrange their lending policies so as to encourage housebuilders, but limiting them so that the housing market does not overheat.

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Economic strategy bewilders MPs

The Budget nearly ready, from both sides yesterday of fundamental questions of government economic strategy. A select committee of the House of Commons, set up to examine the White Paper found it "unintelligible and Treasury proposals for eliminating the need of payments deficit

It doubted the likelihood of a 10 per cent annual increase in exports being achieved, and could not see how that target and the White Paper's assumed 3 per cent rise in output were to be achieved simultaneously. Treasury officials, the committee found, were evading the question of import controls.

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HOME NEWS

MPs find White Paper on public spending 'meaningless' and Treasury targets unrealistic

By David Wood

Political Editor

As the Chancellor of the Exchequer puts the finishing touches to the Budget, he will bring into the Commons next Tuesday, members of a Commons select committee yesterday raised some fundamental questions.

Has the Government abandoned the policy of full employment? Is the Treasury muzzling in speaking about import controls because the Chancellor is likely to adopt the device to bring the trading accounts into balance?

A sub-committee of the public expenditure committee was reporting sceptically on the White Paper Public Expenditure to 1978-79 (Command 5879). The members disagreed on party lines about what was politically wrong with the document, but agreed that it was meaningless. A senior Conservative MP commented: "Public expenditure White Papers are meaningless because they have to placate too many people."

The argument of the expenditure committee is that the Treasury projections for eliminating the balance of payments deficit are unrealistic. To achieve the Treasury's stated target, the volume of exports would have to increase by an average of a tenth a year, and the committee greatly doubt the likelihood of anything remotely approaching that being achieved.

It accepts that the target could be achieved by reducing the growth in imports relative to the growth in output. But on import controls Treasury's import restrictions were suggested, and by an accident of timing, with a Budget imminent, Treasury ministers were in a purdah and unable to give evidence.

"We cannot see how the Treasury's balance of payments

target and the White Paper's assumed 3 per cent rise in output can be achieved simultaneously," the committee reported. The former could be achieved at the expense of the latter, it said, but that would inevitably be accompanied by contraction leading to unemployment likely to be unacceptable.

The committee said the White Paper seemed inconsistent. It wondered how far the public would tolerate less real capital expenditure upon, for example, hospitals and schools.

Members of the committee from both sides of the House developed their scepticism about the White Paper at a press conference in the Commons yesterday.

Mr Brian Sedgmore, Labour MP for Luton, West, argued that the central issue raised was the need for the shift of resources into the balance of payments to bring the deficit down within the next four years, but on that question the White Paper did not touch reality.

Had the Government abandoned the policy of full employment? Or had it, in spite of the stubborn resistance of Treasury witnesses, become committed to import controls?

Mr Sedgmore observed that Treasury witnesses had denied that it was government policy to let unemployment rise to cut back imports; that devaluation was being considered; and that import controls, about which they erected an "iron curtain", were likely.

As Mr Sedgmore saw it, the Treasury document disclosed no weapons for achieving its objective. "Whether you regard it as a work of fiction or a Treasury will not talk about this in a sensible manner or discuss in theory what is going on," he said.

He added that the committee should change its stance. It

should be furnished with specialist advice and produce its own economic models, and then the Treasury could question its views, instead of the other way about.

Mr Nicholas Ridley, Conservative MP for Cirencester and Tewkesbury, said he did not think import controls were worth considering. What was needed was resources should be consumed at home on a lower scale.

"Physical control is no help, and it simply will not work," he said.

Looking ahead to the Budget as a member of the public expenditure committee, Mr Ridley commented: "This is a time for not inflating. There is no reason for a Budget at all for economic management reasons. If there is to be a Budget, judgment in the light of it should be, if anything, tighter, and certainly not inflationary."

Mr Michael English, Labour MP for Northampton, West, chairman of the subcommittee, said that "none of us desires an inflationary Budget next Tuesday". If there was to be any change in the deficit, they believed as a committee that it should be reduced by more than 10 per cent.

Mr Ridley interrupted: "It should be done by a cut in government expenditure," and Mr English countered: "The majority of the committee would agree with what I said."

Mr English can clearly expect challenge from members of the committee from both sides of the House in the Budget debate next week; not least because public expenditure White Papers are now regarded as works of fiction, and the Treasury will not talk about this in a sensible manner or discuss in theory what is going on," he said.

He added that the committee should change its stance. It

Rail unions to press for up to 30% rise

By Alan Hamilton

Labour Staff

Union leaders of 200,000 railwaymen are to press their claim for pay rises of up to 30 per cent, in spite of reservations from the TUC that they may be bringing the social contract to a halt.

The three railway unions, which have rejected an offer of 20 per cent from British Rail, will meet the Railways Board again on Friday, when they hope that a better offer will be forthcoming. When they last met, British Rail unions were told that the railways were on the verge of bankruptcy, and that an excessive pay settlement would inevitably lead to more line closures and cuts in services.

Mr Len Murray, TUC general secretary, and members of the TUC economic committee, yesterday met railway union leaders, including Mr Sidney Weighell, of the National Union of Railwaymen, and Mr Ray Buxton, of the Railways Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen. Mr Murray said later that the unions had expressed the desire to see the social contract succeed.

Asked to explain their claim, union leaders told Mr Murray that they had no intention of abandoning the position in the wages league they won after last year's major pay restructuring on British Rail. They said that they believed in the year the success of the miners and the electricity workers, whose unions have won increases well outside the social contract guidelines.

A dispute is developing between the Government and several London councils over prospective drastic cuts in their housing grants. The councils fear that pressure to reduce public expenditure will jeopardise any chance of alleviating the capital's acute housing shortage.

The most sensitive issue is the decision, already announced, to reduce grants for improvement and renovation. Last week Mrs Margaret Thatcher, chairman of the Housing Committee, planned the battle standard, said the shabby Georgian facades of Lloyd Square, in Finsbury, proclaiming that government policies were encouraging the council to knock such houses down and replace them with new ones.

Islington, with its high proportion of Georgian and early Victorian terraces, epitomises the houses involved.

In Barnsbury, for example, where a geographically isolated area has been designated for improvement, the council has been forced to spend up to £200,000 on buying a dilapidated house which then cost a further £35,000 to convert to, say, three flats. Each flat then has to be a certain standard, and the council has to begin to cover interest charges on the council's borrowings.

The Government has argued that local authorities are spending too much on improving their own estates, which do not merit priority, and not enough on maintaining them. But privately, ministers are convinced by the costs and feel that councils are insisting on unrealistically high standards of rehabilitation.

Mr Watson's answer is that a policy of patching up and "cosmetic" work is a short-term fix, and that the only way of ensuring a long-term stock of good housing, that, because of shortages of money and labour, the council was keeping houses empty for unnecessarily long periods.

It turned more than 3,000 houses scheduled for rehabilitation, of which only about 150 were completed, but at the present rate it would run out of money in about October or November. It is paradoxical and illogical that we should be in this state at this moment," he said.

The Greater London Council yesterday decided to report that it was planning to start its housing programme by up to a third. It was considering a number of options, Mr Anthony Judge, chairman of the housing management committee, said. "We are absolutely no decisions" had yet been taken.

There was further legal argument in the absence of the jury when the bombing plot trial was resumed at Birmingham Crown Court yesterday. It was adjourned until next Monday.

When the jury returned Mr Justice Forbes said it seemed the trial would occupy considerably less time than had originally been expected. The defence had indicated that they did not require expert testimony to be proved by calling witnesses.

Relations between the BBC and the IBA seem to be growing strained over the television coverage of sports events. Last month the BBC and the IBA agreed that the BBC should take turns to cover big football matches, on the ground that the BBC was a national organisation and could not ignore national events.

Mr Michael Swann, chairman of the BBC, agreed, however, that there was merit in the suggestion of alternating coverage of evening football matches from Europe. He proposed that the BBC shall televise the European Cup Final this year, and independent television next year.

Replying to Sir Michael yesterday, Lady Plowden, the new chairman of the IBA, said they



Seven-inch diameter wire rope slings made by British Ropes to meet the heavy lifting requirements of the offshore oil industry.

Councils in clash over likely cuts on housing

By John Young

Planning Reporter

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Protestant factions 'resolve their feud'

From Christopher Walker

After months of internecine warfare, which has greatly weakened "loyalist" solidarity in Northern Ireland, an unexpected announcement was made last night that the dispute between the two main Protestant paramilitary groups, the Ulster Defence Association and the Ulster Volunteer Force, had been settled. Delegates from the two groups had met briefly.

The UVF said its units had been ordered to stand down and its members were to return to their normal civilian lives. The UDA, in turn, said it would accept the UVF's decision.

The UVF spokesman said: "There will be no problem in maintaining discipline now that this decision has been taken."

Mr John Girden, a leading member of the UDA and its official spokesman, said the end of the feud was welcome. The effectiveness of the truce would depend largely, however, on the safe return of Mr Hugh McNeill and Mr David Long, two UDA members who were kidnapped from their furniture van in Shankill Road on Monday morning.

The identity of those responsible for the abduction is not clear, but mutual suspicion that the truce was a ruse to weaken the UVF threatened to widen the split. Yesterday's meeting was called to prevent that.

Late on Thursday one of the many splinter groups, the Ulster Defence Association, said it was withdrawing from the truce. Mr Justice Forbes said the two groups were being held as hostages for the patching up of the feud.

If the truce lasts, it will strengthen the hand of the

loyalist politicians when they take their seats in the forthcoming Convention.

Since the defeat of the Executive last May, their strongest card has been the threat of another general strike. But the feud, which has caused at least two deaths and countless shootings and bombings incidents, made that prospect impossible.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Coggan, yesterday said the full weight of his office behind the Protestant clergyman who laid the ground for the latest ceasefire by meeting leaders of the Provisional IRA at an hotel in Finsbury Square at the end of his three-day visit to Ulster. Dr Coggan said:

"I should have thought that the clergy were right to talk to the Provisional IRA. I would say that when you have the chance, not much can be achieved by silence."

Commenting on the activities of the Rev Ian Paisley, leader of one of the three parties that make up the loyalist coalition, Dr Coggan said: "Anybody who tends to whip up hate does not help a situation which is as tense as this."

The British Army was involved in a shooting incident in Belfast last night after a search for a bomb in the predominantly Roman Catholic Marston area. Two men burst into the bar, fired two shots and rushed out again after their gun jammed. Their car was challenged by an Army lookout post and shot was fired. Later the car crashed as it was being driven away.

Police said that later two men both suffering from bullet wounds, were rushed to hospital after their car crashed.

Kathy Kirby must pay

Kathy Kirby, the singer, who was dismissed from her job as a local government official, was given judgment in a High Court case yesterday. Mr Justice Kerr described Miss Kirby as a "disreputable person". She dismissed a claim for £10,000 damages, which she sought for the loss of her job and the loss of her reputation.

Mr William Preston, who acted as her personal secretary, said that she was a "disreputable person" and that she was "not fit to be employed". He said that she was "not fit to be employed" and that she was "not fit to be employed".

The damages and other money she owes him will be assessed later by a High Court Master.

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Police given 300 names for 'Black Panther'

Police investigating the murder of Lesley White and yesterday that they had received more than 300 calls from people giving their names of men who could be the Black Panther.

The names were given after Thursday's reconstruction in Kidsgrove, Staffordshire, by a local actor playing the part of the kidnapper. Commander John Anderson, who is leading the inquiry, said yesterday that the Panther had had a character like so far. But his luck was sure to run out.

A senior officer involved in the murder hunt has appealed for companies engaged in transporting "hot" workers from the Potteries area to be alerted to the police immediately. He said the police wanted to find out about men being taken from the Potteries area to work outside who might have been dismissed in local police inquiries.

Employment exchanges have also been asked to discover whether a man answering the Black Panther's description had applied for unemployment benefit.

Roulette player is acquitted of plot charge

Eustace Portyrazos, a Greek shipping broker, was cleared of a charge of plotting with others to cheat the Le Cercle Club, in Park Lane, London, of £35,000 by playing a "rigged" roulette wheel. Mr Portyrazos, aged 31, lives at Radnor Place, Paddington, London.

Frank Bennett, aged 29, of Edon Court, Brondesbury Park, Kilburn, London, a crozier at the club, pleaded guilty to the conspiracy charge. He was given an 18-month jail sentence, suspended for two years, fined £1,000 and ordered to pay £1,000 compensation to the club.

More papers up on Monday

The two evening newspapers in London, the Evening Standard and the Evening News, are to go up in price by 1p from Monday. The price of the Standard will be 7p and the News will be 6p. The price of the Sunday edition of the Evening News will be 7p. The price of the Sunday edition of the Standard will be 8p.

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Electricians step up pay strikes

Local authority electricians are to step up their selective industrial action in support of a pay claim. Stop stewards from 180 authorities in England and Wales decided yesterday in London to extend strike action to Manchester and Swansea immediately.

Nearly 800 electricians in Leeds, Sheffield, Hull, Birmingham, Newcastle upon Tyne and Cardiff are now on strike. The rest of the 500 men affected by the 10-week official dispute are banning overtime and working to rule.

Selective action has also affected some London areas and the situation there is being reviewed.

Mr Peter Adams, national officer of the Electricians' Union, told yesterday's meeting that he would have further discussions with the employers next week. The union executive will review the position on April 28. He added: "Members decided today that in the meantime they would escalate action where possible."

The electricians have been offered an increase in their basic rate from £29.50 to £32.50, but they complain that that is still well short of the £45.20 received by electricians under contract.

Mr Adams said: "Only rates more in keeping with the contracting electricians' rate would be acceptable."

The Sunday Times magazine tomorrow begins a series, called Home Front, designed for every householder worried by the soaring cost of maintaining the home. Its aim is to show how people, however unskilled, can cut the cost of repairs, carry out maintenance work, redecorate, improve, and if necessary enlarge their homes without relying on experts.

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Courts again disrupted by prison officers' action

By Peter Evans

Home Affairs Correspondent

Lightning token stoppages by prison officers at two London jails, Holloway and Pentonville, further disrupted court hearings yesterday. The stoppages, which are unofficial, began at 10.15 and lasted for about 15 minutes.

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Glasgow thanks the Army with mugs and whisky

From Our Correspondent

Glasgow

Sir William Gray, Lord Provost of Glasgow, yesterday presented a special mug and a miniature bottle of whisky to Lieutenant-Colonel Philip Davies, Commanding Officer of the 1st Battalion, The Royal Scots, as a token of thanks for the 2,900 men who cleared 31,500 tons of refuse in the prolonged unofficial strike by 380 dustcart drivers.

Colonel Davies agreed to see that each soldier received a mug and a miniature bottle of whisky.

Sir William congratulated the soldiers at Territorial Headquarters in Maryhill, which served as the command centre for Operation Clean Sweep. When the last soldier left last night, 51 per cent of the rubbish in Glasgow had been cleared.

The Lord Provost was uncertain how much the corporation would have to pay for the engagement of troops. However, he said that the corporation would also be making a substantial contribution to the Army Benevolent Fund.

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Plan for 3,000 homes in village

Proposals to build 3,000 homes for Londoners in Great Britain in Surrey are to be considered by an outer London borough. A town for 20,000 people is planned at the village of Mole Valley, near Guildford. The plan is to build 3,000 homes for Londoners in Great Britain in Surrey are to be considered by an outer London borough. A town for 20,000 people is planned at the village of Mole Valley, near Guildford.

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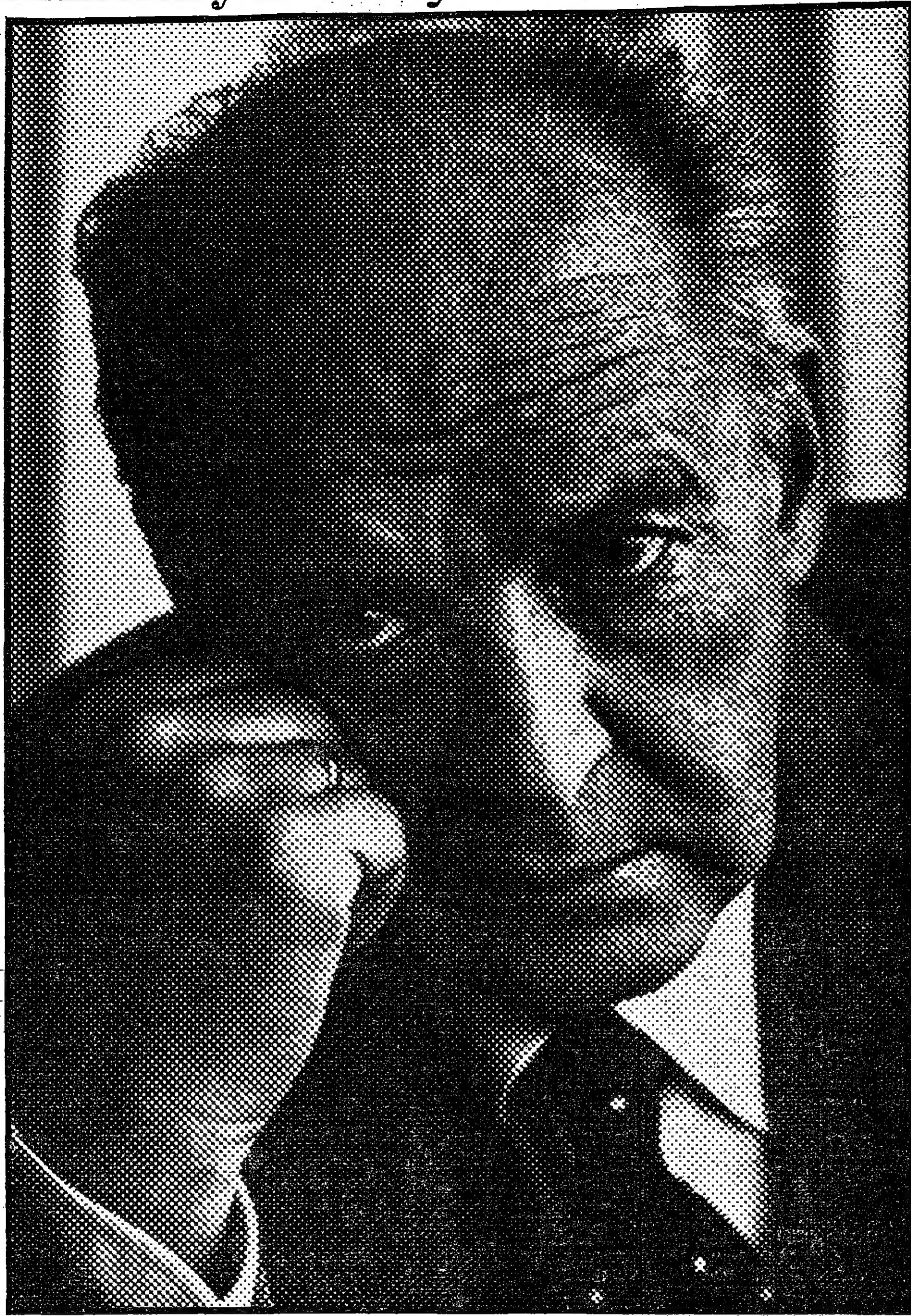
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A literary front/by Vladimir Nabokov



The "Boyars" publishing firm (Morozov's and mine was the "Bronze Horseman", its main rival), with a bookshop (selling not only émigré editions but also tractor novels from Moscow) and a lending library, occupied a smart three-storey house of the hôtel particulier type. In my day it stood between a garage and a cinema: 40 years before (in the vista of reverse metamorphosis) the former had been a fountain and the latter a group of stone nymphs. The house had belonged to the Merin de Melasse family and had been acquired at the turn of the century by a Russian cosmopolitan, Dmitri de Midoff, who with his friend S. I. Stepanov established there the headquarters of an anti-despotic conspiracy. The latter liked to recall the sign language of old-fashioned rebellion: the half-drawn curtain and alabaster vase revealed in the drawing-room window so as to indicate to the expected guest from Russia that the way was clear. An aesthetic touch graced revolutionary intrigues in those years. Midoff died soon after World War One, and by that time the Terrorist party, to which those cozy people belonged, had lost its "stylistic" appeal as Stepanov himself put it. I do not know who later acquired the house or how it happened that Oks (Osip Lvovich Oksman, 1885-1944?) rented it for his business.

The house was dark except for three windows: two adjacent rectangles of light in the middle of the upper floor row, d8 and e8, Continental notation (where the letter denotes the file and the number the rank of a chess square) and another light just below at e7. Good God, had I forgotten at home the note I had scribbled for the unknown Miss Blagova? No, it was still there in my breast pocket under the old, treasured, horribly hot and long Trinity College muffler. I hesitated between a side door on my right—marked *Magazin*—and the main entrance, with a chess coronet above the bell. Finally I chose the coronet. We were playing a Blitz game: my opponent moved at once, lighting the vestibule fan at d6. One could not help wondering if under the house there might not exist the five lower floors which would complete the chessboard and that somewhere, in subterranean mystery, new men might not be working out the doom of a fouler tyranny.

Oks, a tall, hony, elderly man with a Shakespearian pate, started to tell me how honoured he was at getting a chance to welcome the author of *Camera*—here I thrust the note I carried into his extended palm and prepared to leave. He had dealt with hysterical artists before. None could resist his bland bookside manner.

"Yes, I know all about it," he said, retaining and parting my hand. "She'll call you; though, to tell the truth, I do not envy anybody having to use the services of that capricious, absent-minded young

lady. We'll go up to my study, unless you prefer—no, I don't think so," he continued opening a double door on the left and dubiously switching on the light for a moment to reveal a chilly reading room in which a long baize-covered table, dingy chairs, and the cheap busts of Russian classics contradicted a lovely painted ceiling swarming with naked children among purple, pink, and amber clusters of grapes. On the right (another tentative light snapped) a short passage led to the shop proper where I recalled having once had a row with a pert old female who objected to my not wishing to pay for a few copies of my own novel. So we walked up the once noble stairs, which now had something seldom seen even in Viennese dream comics, namely disparate balustrades, the sinistral one an ugly new rump-and-railing affair and the other, the original ornate set of battered, doomed, but still charming carved wood with supports in the form of magnified chess pieces.

"I am honoured—" began Oks all over again, as we reached his so-called *Kabinet* (study), at e7, a room cluttered with ledgers, packed books, half-unpacked books, towers of books, heaps of newspapers, pamphlets, galleries, and slim white paperback collections of poems—tragic officials, with the cool, restrained titles then in fashion—*Prokh-*

loda ("coolness"), *Sderzhenost* ("restraint").

He was one of those persons who for some reason or other are often interrupted, but whom no force in our blessed galaxy will prevent from completing their sentence, despite new interruptions, of an elemental or poetical nature, the death of his interlocutor ("I was just saying to him, doctor—"), or the entrance of a dragon. In fact it would seem that those interruptions actually help to polish the phrase and give it its final form. In the meantime the agonizing itch of his being unfinished poisons the mind. It is worse than the pimple which cannot be sprang before one gets home, and is almost as bad as a liver's recollection of that last little rope nipped in the sweet bud by the intrusion of an accursed policeman.

"I am deeply honoured," finished at last Oks, "to welcome to this historic house the author of *Camera Obscura*, your finest book in my modest opinion."

"It ought to be modest," I said, controlling myself (opals in Nepal before the avalanche), "because, you idiot, the title of my novel is *Camera Lucida*."

"There, there," said Oks

deserve such a harsh rebuke. *Lucida, Lucida*, by all means! A *propas*—concerning Anna Blagova (another piece of unfinished business—or, who knows, a touching attempt to divert and pacify me with an interesting anecdote), I am not sure you know that I am Bert's first cousin. Thirty-five years ago in St. Petersburg she and I worked in the same student organization. We were preparing the assassination of the Premier. How far all that is! His daily route had to be closely established; I was one of the observers. Standing at a certain corner every day in the disguise of a vanilla ice-cream vendor! Can you imagine that? Nothing came of our plans. They were thwarted by Azef, the great double agent."

I saw no point in prolonging my visit, but he produced a bottle of cognac and I accepted a drink, for I was beginning to tremble again. "Your *Camera*," he said, consulting a ledger "has been selling not badly in my shop, not badly at all: twenty-three, sorry, twenty-five copies in the first half of last year, and fourteen in the second. Of course, genuine fame, not mere commercial success, depends on the behaviour of a book in the Lending Department, and there all your tales are told. Not to leave this unsubstantiated, let us go up to the stacks."

I followed my energetic host to the upper floor. The lending

library spread like a gigantic spider, bulged like a monstrous tumour, oppressed the brain like the expanding world of delirium. In a bright oasis amidst the dim shelves I noticed a group of people sitting around an oval table. The colours were vivid and sharp, but at the same time remote-looking as in a magic-lantern scene. A good deal of red wine and golden brandy accompanied the animated discussion. I recognized the critic Basilevski, his sycophants Hristov and Boyarski, my friend Morozov, the novelist Shipogradov and Sokolovski, the honest nonentity Saknovakov, author of the popular social satire *Geroy nashey vry* ("Hero of Our Era") and two young poets, Lazarev (collection *Serebryy*) and Faruk (collection *Silence*). Some of the heads turned toward us, and the benevolent bear Morozov even struggled to his feet, grinning—but my host said they were having a business meeting and should be left alone.

"You have glimpsed," he added, "the paragon of a new literary review, *Prime Numbers*; at least they think they are parturition: actually, they are boozing and gossiping. Now let me show you something."

He led me to a distant corner and triumphantly trained his flashlight on the gaps in my shelf of books. "Look," he cried, "how

many copies are out. All of *Princess Mary* is out, I mean *Mary*—damn it, I mean *Tamara*. I love *Tamara*, I mean your *Tamara*, not Lermontov's or Rubinstein's. Forgive me. One gets so confused among so many damned masterpieces."

I said I was not feeling well and would like to go home. He offered to accompany me. Or would I like a taxi? I did not. He kept furtively directing at me the electric torch through his incarnadined fingers to see if I was not about to faint. With soothing sounds he led me down a side staircase. The spring night, at least, felt real.

After a moment of rumination and an upward glance at the lighted windows, Oks beckoned to the night watchman who was stroking the sad little dog of a dog-walking neighbour. I saw my thoughtful companion shake hands with the grey-cloaked old fellow, then point to the light of the revellers, then look at his watch, then tip the man, and shake hands with him in parting, as if the 10-minute walk to my lodgings were a perilous pilgrimage.

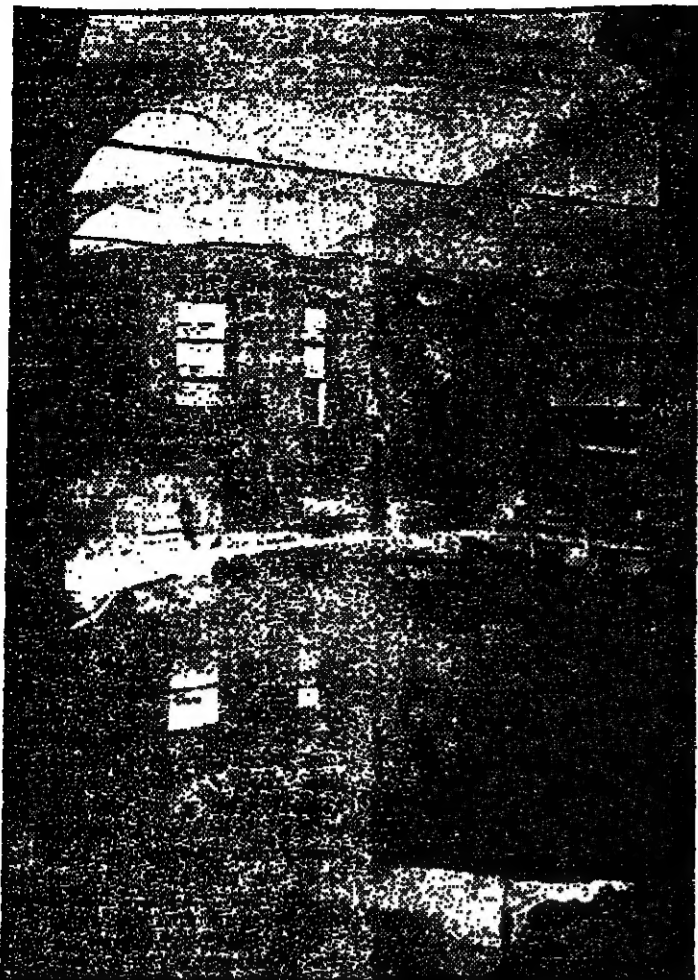
"Bon," he said upon rejoining me. "If you don't want a taxi, let us set out on foot. He will take care of my imprisoned visitors. There are heaps of things I want you to tell me about your work and your life. Your *comrades* say you are 'arrogant and unsocial' as Oleg describes himself to Tatiana but we can't all be Leusakis, can we? Let me take advantage of this pleasant stroll to describe my two meetings with your celebrated father. The first was at the opera in the days of the First Duma. I knew, of course, the portraits of its most prominent members. From high up in the gods I, a poor student, saw him appear in a rosy toga with his wife and two little boys, one of which must have been you. The other time was at a public discussion of current politics in the surreal period of the Revolution; he spoke immediately after Kerenki, and the contrast between our fiery friend and your father, with his English *sangfroid*, and absence of gesticulation—"

"My father," I said, "Died six months before I was born." "Well, I seem to have goofed again (*opya askandaliya*)," observed Oks, after taking quite a minute to find his handkerchief, blow his nose with the grandiose deliberation of Varlamov. In the role of Gogol's Town Mayor, wrap up the result, and, pucker the swaddle. "Yes, I'm not lucky with you. Yet that basque remains in my mind. The contrast was truly remarkable."

I was to run into Oks again, three or four times at least, in the course of the dwindling years before World War Two. He used to welcome me with a knowing twinkle as if we shared some very private and rather naughty secret. His superb library was eventually grabbed by the Germans who then lost it to the Russians, even better grabbers in that time-honoured game. Osip Lvovich himself was to die when attempting an intrepid escape—when almost having escaped—barefoot, in blood-soaked underwear, from the "experimental hospital" of a Nazi concentration camp.

This extract is from *Look at the Harlequins* by Vladimir Nabokov, which is to be published by Weidenfeld & Nicolson on April 17 at £3.25.

Travel Weekend Bath



Circular Roman bath at Bath

In the present economic climate, perhaps in the knowledge that most people will not be able to afford the fortnightly holiday they have become used to, or their own customary trips abroad, many British hotel groups or tour operators have been introducing shorter breaks, or weekend trips. I have sampled only two of the many. As newspapers come out on Mondays journalists do not often get "normal" weekends.

Midway through an attack of flu which had all the symptoms of galloping consumption was perhaps not the best time to try out British Railways Golden Rail Three Day Breaker. But I did. These go to 11 different centres in the United Kingdom and I chose Bath. What my trip included was first class train fare from London, a reserved seat on the train, a voucher for a taxi to and from the station and hotel and breakfast and an evening meal for three days.

It was raining but that does not detract from the charms of Bath. I was away seeing the city through my own watery haze and it didn't take me long to decide that if I had to die of flu, it was far more comfortable in the hotel I was staying at than the Beaufort, than it would have been at home. Bath is an excellent centre for the non-motorist, regardless of the weather. If it rains there are the Roman baths, the costume museum, the pump room, the theatre (I went to see Alec Guinness and Margaret Leighton in *A Family and a Fortune* which came to London this week). The bus services are good—it is easy to get to Wells, or Priddy for an excellent lunch at the Miners Arms.

The hotel was not a thing of beauty. It is two years old, and although made of Bath stone, resembles a vast concrete slab. But inside it is attractive and comfortable with a good restaurant. I reckoned that the trip was excellent value for money and it could have been even better if, for example, I had been able to leave London on Thursday morning and return late on Sunday. At £27.50 (including fares) a person it was one of the dearer three-day breakers. They come as cheap as £11.50 in Plymouth and as dear as £38 in Aberdeen, plus fares, of course.

More for those with cars (Stratford station is closed on Sunday) was the weekend I had at Stratford-upon-Avon. This works out at £11 a night at the Arden Hotel or £15 at the Hilton. For that, you get one night's bed and breakfast (any night of the week) and a voucher towards dinner, a tour of Stratford's Shakespearean sites and—this is the lure—a ticket to the theatre (without the bother of booking).

I enjoyed Twelfth Night and stayed at the Hilton. If you can stand Ye Old Hilton New World style, the food was good though buried under the usual Americanese which is used to describe a perfectly respectable piece of meat. The Arden is more homely and right by the theatre. These trips will continue through the summer season and Henry V, Henry IV parts one and two and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* are this season's plays. Anyone who doesn't mind eating before the theatre—and that means early in Stratford—can do much more than eat in the theatre's own Bankside restaurant which is inexpensive and sound.

Working in London I naturally haven't tried spending the weekend there, but most hotel groups have special terms for weekenders which are worth knowing about. Trust House Forte, for instance, offers "Baroque Breaks" which include nine London hotels offering bed and full breakfast for either Friday and Saturday or Saturday and Sunday. Sunday as an extra day comes at half the rate which varies from £11 per person for the two nights at the Barkston Hotel to £21 at Quaglin's or the St George's Hotel.

Grand Metropolitan Hotels give a choice of 21 hotels in London and their prices for two nights including rail fares from many towns in the United Kingdom. I can't give any prices here because it all depends on where you live.

Similar all-in rail and accommodation weekends are offered in London by Highgate Holidays, the hotel offshoot of J. Lyons. A two-day weekend at the Strand Palace, for example, costs £19.40 from Brighton or £29.90 from Glasgow. Trust House Forte, Grand Metropolitan and Riehme do, of course, offer similar packages.

It really is worth looking into all these bargains and booking them before you travel, because hotels do not always offer them to casual visitors. Here are a few addresses for details: Your Guide Friday Services for the Shakespeare trip, 1 Shakespeare Street, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire.

Golden Rail Three-Day Breakers from railway stations, or Golden Rail, PO Box 12, York YO1 1XN.

Trust House Forte has reservations offices around the country. If there isn't one in your area the London office is 71-75 Uxbridge Road, London W5 5SL. Telephone 01-567 3444.

John Buckingham, Grand Metropolitan Hotels, Stratford Place, London W1A 4YU. Telephone 01-625 6618.

Highgate Holidays, 66 Hammer-smith Road, London W14 0PA.

Margaret Allen

Having, in the words of one of its few serious guide-books, "recently come out of centuries of relative hibernation and entered into the turbulent life of the twentieth century", El Salvador is currently engaged in demonstrating to the hilt its allegiance to the cultural precepts of modern living. In July this smallest of Central American republics will play host to Miss Universe, the ultimate proof of the muscular superiority of transatlantic womanhood. Meanwhile the Salvadoreans have been tuning up, both aesthetically and organizationally, with a music festival, the fourth to be held in the local capital, San Salvador, and a strictly Europeanized affair of orchestral symphony concerts and solo instrumental recitals. While it is just possible that such events do not closely touch the 70 per cent or so of the population who, despite the visible influx of United States capital, still live at near-subsistence level on small plots of land held in quasi-feudal tenure, the local press have been in expansive mood over the significance of this latest festival. "The event," wrote *Cultura y Pueblo*, "will ensure that for a fortnight the focus of American—no, dare I almost say world—attention will be San Salvador."

Such hyperbole has a gruesome tendency to express the character of the thing represented as well as the character of representation. But in this case the exaggeration is off the mark. Although, like all extremely poor countries, El Salvador would like nothing better than a dose of good foreign publicity with its attendant advantages in the matter of foreign exchange, the music festival is in fact a genuinely national event, aimed principally at catering for the needs of the inevitably music-starved locals. This point is reflected not only in the actual character and atmosphere of the concerts, but in such incidentals as ticket-prices, which, though high at the smart suburban Teatro Presidente, were derisory at the Teatro Libertad, in the heart of San Salvador's depressed downtown area. At the Presidente, where about half the concerts were held, the audience had much of the air of a colonial elite enthusiastically reclaiming its European artistic heritage. But at the Libertad the enthusiasm was much less partisan, much more spontaneous and infectious.

This fact would have appealed to the original patron of the Salvador Festival, Pablo Casals, who conducted his own oratorio, *El Pesebre*, at the very first festival concert in 1967. Since then Casals's sometime associates—Alexander Schneider, Isaac Stern, Jaime Laredo and Eugene Istomin, who gave two piano recitals this year—have been prominent

among the festival's visiting artists. But the festival has also done something to bring forward local musicians, even if this year artists from neighbouring Guatemala were more in evidence: notably a brilliant marimba-player, Morales Manu, and a composer-conductor, Jorge Samuilenos, whose music displayed a disconcerting and apparently indiscriminate facility in the styles of Ravel and Lutoslawski. The best Salvadoran artist in sight, on the other hand, was the caricature Tono Salazar, who had a delightful retrospective in the exhibition hall of the Parque Cuscatlan (entrance completely free). But Salazar does not live in El Salvador, nor, I should imagine, do many of the best Salvador-born musicians. For it

leaps to the eye and ear that the musical opportunities in this culturally ambiguous country are at best limited. The cultural ambiguity lies in the fact that while European music is of supreme interest to the artistically inclined ruling classes in Salvador, its relevance to the lives of most people in the country is remote. This is much truer in Latin America than in Europe itself, which lacks the racial and cultural divisions of the colonial-type society. Unfortunately little seems to survive of any autochthonous Indian music (their instruments are not even to be found in the souvenir shops), while the mestizaje—the mixed caste who make up the large majority of the population—have probably

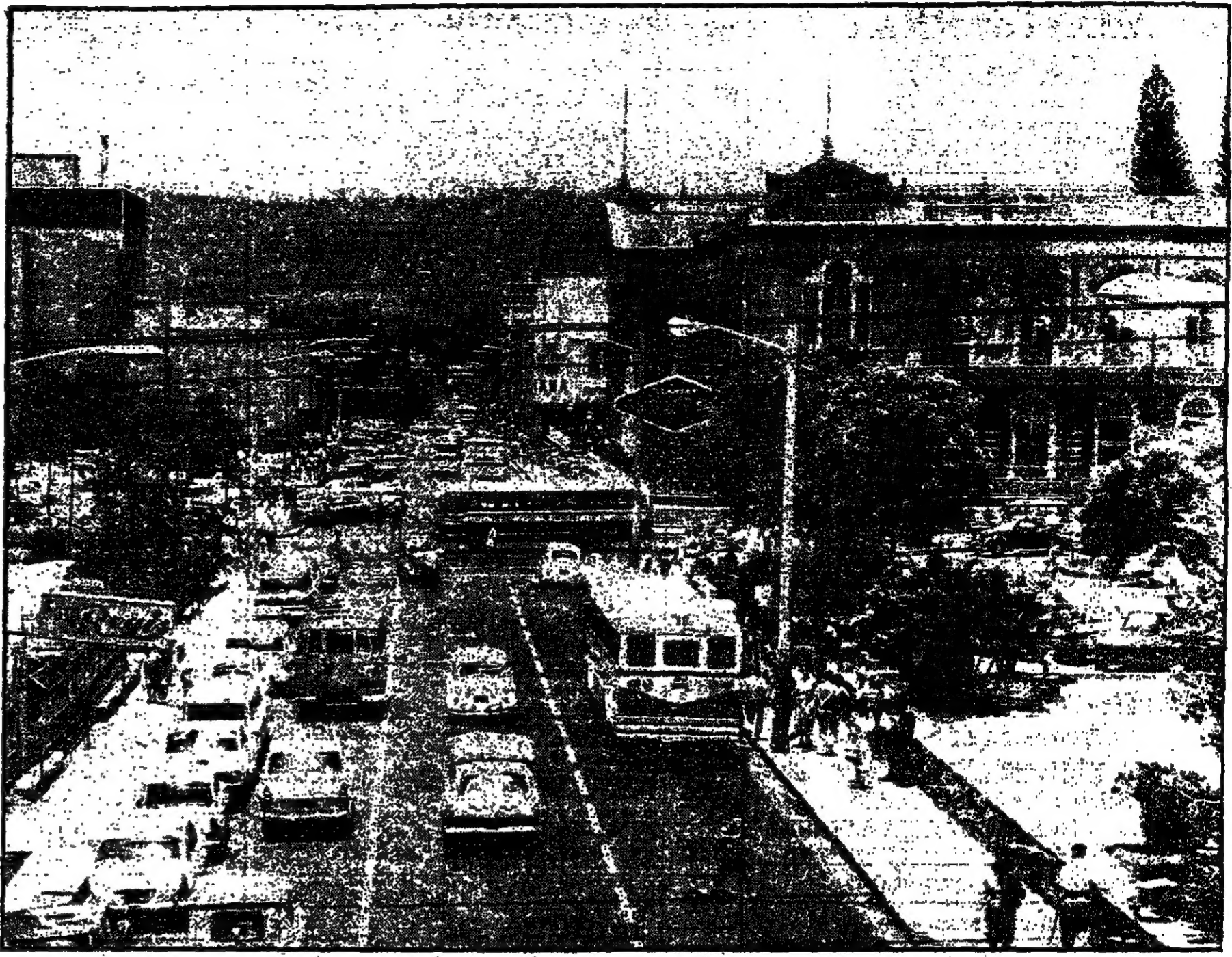
never had anything of the kind. "Music in El Salvador" therefore means Salvadoran musicians playing and occasionally composing European music, a slightly incongruous and disheartening phenomenon. Since the mid-nineteenth century music has been organized locally along European lines, with a National Conservatoire (now, I'm told, defunct), a National Symphony Orchestra, and even a National String Quartet. But the orchestra and quartet were apparently not thought worth sipping in the festival, which had instead its own orchestra partly recruited from outside the country, and no chamber music. The playing lacked the fluency a European

audience would expect, but was often spirited, notably in a performance of Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* under Sarmientos and in accompaniment to Byron Jennings' efforts at rather spiky playing of Rachmaninov's third concerto. However, I missed the Colon Theatre Orchestra from Buenos Aires, with this year's guest-of-honour Aaron Copland, Benny Goodman and Kyung-Wha Chung, whose visit to the festival in its first week must have placed later events in their true perspective.

El Salvador's next music festival is scheduled for 1977. It is sure to cater once again mainly for the needs of a Europeanized public who otherwise have to rely on the

but gramophone for most of their music. But it would be good if something, however modest, could be engineered of a specifically local character—something more authentically alive than the wretched mock-archaic, sub-Arcadian artefacts which cluttered up the foyer of the Teatro Presidente during this festival. Such things as the peasant "happily" working away at his loom for the amusement of concertgoers who would presumably not relish contact with the man's real working ambience indicate only a rift between culture and environment. One of music's functions, of course, is to close such gaps.

Stephen Walsh



Gardening Right on cucumber

The cucumber, marrow, pumpkin, squash and melon family are sometimes a little puzzling to the gardener, and when you bring in the ornamental gourds as well the confusion is all the more complete. There are two genera involved, and four or five species. The ornamental gourds are varieties of *Cucurbita pepo*. These we buy in a mixed packet, and there are many shapes—like an orange, an apple, Turks cap, warted, green and white or green and yellow pear shaped, and so on. These are not edible and are only used dried and often varnished as an indoor decoration.

There is the danger of some slight confusion here because there is an edible Apple cucumber, small, shaped like an apple, of good flavour and very much appreciated by some people.

Let us look further at cucumbers. As with most vegetables, breeders have been producing F₁ hybrids—ie, varieties pro-

duced by deliberately cross-fertilizing two highly desirable parents to give offspring that are more uniform, productive, earlier, or in some other way more desirable than the old varieties.

The two main developments in cucumbers are the "all female" strains, and the much larger and smoother outdoor varieties. The all female varieties such as Femspout, Pepinex (also known as Feminax), Rocket, or Fertila produce all female flowers, or only a very few male flowers. The importance of this is that you do not have to pick off the male flowers to prevent pollination, and hence bitter cucumbers, which we have to do with the old varieties.

Some of the F₁ hybrids, such as Rocket offered by Suttons, are resistant to cladosporium and blight disease. The creamy white skinned variety Sigmadew, also from Suttons, is really an excellent cucumber, very thin skinned, and while it does

best in a greenhouse, it can be grown outdoors in the south of England.

Another good outdoor cucumber from Suttons is Nadirs, which produces long fruits, but why Clause, the French raisers, gave it this odd name we may never know. Also good for growing outdoors are Victory and Burpee Hybrid, both from Unwins and, of course, most seedsmen, and one can buy the small outdoor gherkin type of cucumber for pickling.

Turning now to marrows, these are broadly divided into bush and trailing types. I have never seen much difference between the trailing varieties, either white, green or striped.

After growing both trailing and bush marrows over many years I think I now prefer the bush types, and here again differences in performance seem minimal to me. The F₁ hybrid Prokor, early maturing and a heavy cropper, and Zucchini, another F₁ early and generous

cropper, are excellent. Some people grow this last variety instead of the All Green Bush or Courgette, and these marrows are picked when six to eight inches long, and cooked whole.

If you want a bit of fun grow the custard marrows, a bush type, either white or yellow. They are round, flat, crimped at the edges, and are excellent for stuffing. You slice off the top as you would a boiled egg, scoop out the middle, and stuff with forcemeat.

An oddity which some people like is the Vegetable Spaghetti. You can eat it like an ordinary marrow, or let it ripen, boil it, cut it in half, remove the seeds and eat the stringy flesh like spaghetti. It is not one of my favourites.

The pumpkin, or giant gourd, and the various squashes which are stored and used in winter, again are not favourites of mine, but many people like them, and of course, for Americans Thanksgiving would be unthinkable without pumpkin pie.

It is a great sadness to me that our climate is not warm enough to grow melons outdoors, and not always for growing them even under cloches. One of the pleasures of a summer or early autumn visit to the west of France is to be able to enjoy for next to nothing Angerine or Charentais cantaloupes, melons, ripened in the field. The breeders are working on the problem and may yet come up with varieties that will mature outside in Britain in any summer.

The F₁ varieties Sweetheart and Burpee Hybrid are good for frames and cloches, and Ogen is a small but sweet flavoured melon. Unwins No Name is still one of the best melons for cloches, and although we never seem to do as well with melons as they do on the Royal Horticultural Society's trials at Wisley, we have had the best results over the years with this variety.

During and just after the war home growing of tobacco was very popular, and many of us produced a quite smokable mixture. Now growing your own tobacco is, once more, like home brewing and wine-making, becoming popular again. If you

wish to try your hand at it the best procedure would be to become a member of the Amateur Tobacco Growers' Association, 60 Whitehorse Lane, London SE1. For a subscription of £1 you get an instruction book, seeds, and much helpful information about growing and curing your own tobacco. The seeds should be sown in the second half of April. Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope with your £1.

And if you are a handy do it yourself type *The Use and Care of Lawn Mowers* (Reader's Digest 50p) now on sale tells you, with the aid of 500 diagrams, how to keep petrol driven, hand and electric mowers in good order. This is the first of a series of guides based on *The Reader's Digest Repair Manual* and *Do it Yourself Manual*.

On Sunday, May 4, between 2 and 4 pm Lady Head is holding another plant sale at Chilworth Manor, Guildford, in aid of the Surrey Association of Young Clubs. There will be a wide selection of shrubs and plants available.

Roy Hay

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Bridge Bidding time

Seekers after truth eventually discover that every bidding system makes one partner more responsible than the other for a key decision. But, as John Locke pointed out three centuries ago, it is one thing to indicate a mistake and another to give the correct answer. The expert always arouses a measure of support when he has gone astray because there is no agreement on the best action to have been taken.

Good bidding exchanges swing to and fro like the pendulum of a clock unless they go smoothly, the sooner they cease the better the result. Relevant information alone should be given and more trouble comes from a misguided response than from any other kind of ill-chosen bid.

South was fortunate in having been dealt a strong two-suiter in the minors when his partner opened one Spade. With his usual caution he responded two Diamonds on ♠ 8 5 0 A Q J

10 6 2 ♣ K Q 10 7 5 and awaited developments; he ran no risk of becoming tied in a knot unless he made a jump bid. But then North introduced an encouraging, if inconvenient, rebid of three Spades. South's first and only mistake was in forgetting that his partner had taken charge and that they would be in game whatever he responded; he could safely bid four Diamonds. Five Diamonds, or even four Spades.

The only response that he could not afford was four Clubs. I am unable to construct a hand where North, after bearing his partner bid a second suit, will now be allowed to play in four Spades. South's four Clubs will provoke no other rebid by North you choose. To imagine four Hearts, four No Trumps, four Diamonds, but the partners will find it almost impossible to keep out of a slam. The information South was invited to furnish on the second round related only to contracts in Spades or Diamonds; despite his distributional strength a minimum bid of four Diamonds was adequate, if only because one jump bid after another invariably upsets the pendulum swing.

The problem of the second response presents itself when ever there is uncertainty concerning the partner in charge. The changing value of a hand is reflected in a more dramatic way after a take-out or penalty double.

East West game; dealer East.

A Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2			
♠			
10	9	8	7
6	5	4	3
2	1		
♥			
A	K	Q	J
10	9	8	7
6	5	4	3
2	1		
♦			
A	K	Q	J
10	9	8	7
6	5	4	3
2	1		
♣			
A	K	Q	J
10	9	8	7
6	5	4	3
2	1		

North South are not talking the same language. North is defending on minimum values where his partner is looking for a penalty or game. When South elected to pass the double of one Club he could not subsequently afford to bid his suit at the three level without more encouragement from his partner, and North had no justification whatsoever for raising to four Hearts.

Edward Mayer

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The puzzle over the pterosaur: how did the world's biggest bird ever manage to fly?

The surprise created in the popular mind by Douglas Lawson's discovery of an immense pterosaur—a beast whose wings spanned about 51 feet according to the most reliable computer estimate—is only paralleled by the bewilderment experienced in scientific circles.

Lawson and his colleagues spent three seasons excavating the bones of this Mesozoic Brobdingnagian before announcing the results in the recent issue of *Science*. Remains of three individuals have turned up so far, including an assortment of necks, hindlegs, toothless beaks and four wings, in Brewster County's Big Bend National Park in Texas. At least one more waits to be exhumed, and until that is done Lawson is declining to christen his monster.

The bones lay entombed in late Cretaceous rocks, giving the beasts an age of 70 million years. They thrived, in fact, at the very end of the dinosaur's reign. Lawson's was the last and largest of a race of exotic Mesozoic flying animals.

Pterosaurs were an eminently successful group for over 120 million years. Older species were smaller, and more manoeuvrable, but during the Cretaceous they evolved into the largest airborne creatures to have inhabited the earth.

Being such a colossal size, they present us with a major headache when we attempt to sort out their flight mechanics. The root of the problem is, of course, the lack of a living analogue to serve as a model.

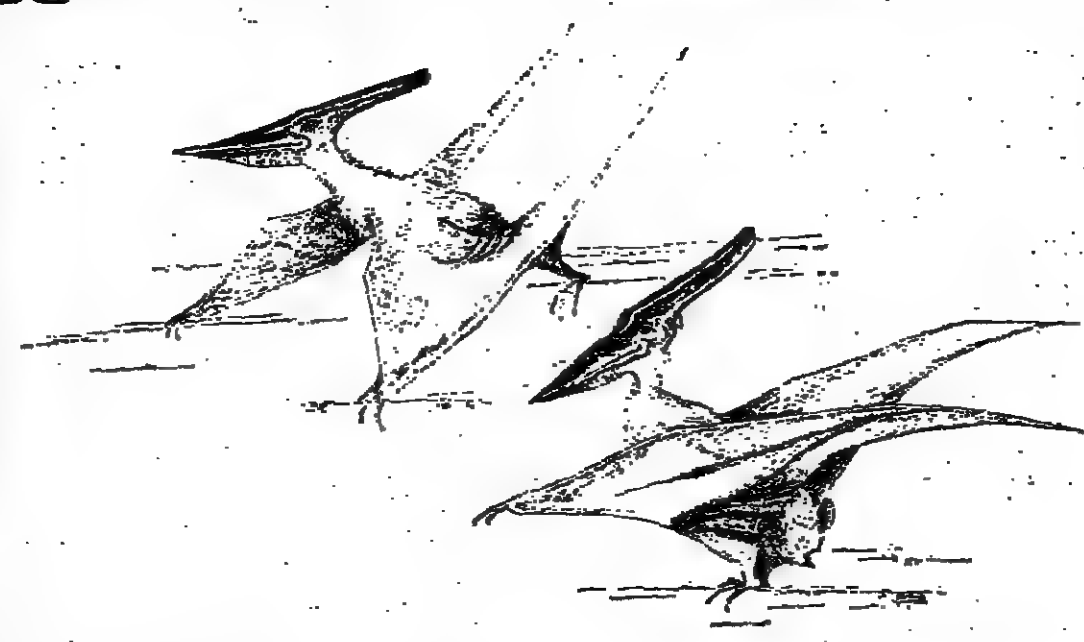
When Baron Cuvier, writing at the time of the French Revolution, glimpsed the first pterosaur he gave a warning that the flying reptile—with an elongated fourth finger supporting a

wing membrane—was totally unlike anything surviving on the planet.

Cuvier's words of warning concerning the pterosaur's uniqueness have rung true with a vengeance. The beast has flagrantly violated practically every characteristic attributed to it. It had a large bird-like brain, with hemispheres that pressed against the braincase. (This occurs in mammals and birds, but not living reptiles.) The reason that winger "reptiles" independently evolved avian-style brains springs immediately to mind. Smaller pterosaurs (some were as tiny as sparrows) were flappers, encountering the same problems of stability and manoeuvrability as birds, resulting in the evolution of similar flight controls.

Where did pterosaurs find the energy for such strenuous activity? The second blow to Cuvier's "reptilian" pterosaur came with the realization that this highly intelligent creature was warm-blooded with a constant high energy output like a bird. Cold-blooded reptiles are not capable of sustained activity. Understandably, this is not conducive to staying aloft; a lizard miraculously endowed with wings would be exhausted merely by the act of taking-off. Pterosaurs were probably much like birds in their physiology.

As pterosaurs were warm-blooded and many were small, why did they not perish of exposure? There are, after all, no naked birds. The reason was a furry pelt. The find that established unequivocally the presence of hair was made in the southern Russian province of Kazakhstan in 1970. Both wings and body of this flying ordinary detail were coated in silky fur. All pterosaurs were hairy, but we seldom uncover



Drawing by Jessica Guyron

The Pteranodon (above), with a wingspan of about 20ft, was a slow gliding creature. The newly found pterosaur has a wingspan of about 51ft.

fossils retaining skin impressions.

From these facts we can follow a tortuous path reasoning to reveal the pterosaur's lifestyle. How did they reproduce? Was there post-natal care? (This is almost unknown in living reptiles, which may even eat their progeny.)

The pelvis was narrow, so the young were probably brought into the world in an immature state. Therefore they required warmth, nourishment and protection. Food was possibly fetched by one parent while the other tended the offspring. Pterosaurs may have paired for a season (or even life) and it has been suggested that the

later Cretaceous giants were colonial. A social organization may have been accompanied by ritualistic social grooming and singing to ward off intruders off private property.

We can now see the wisdom in Cuvier's warning: the pterosaur was about as reptilian as a mammal or bird. Pterosaurs are an entity in their own right, equalling reptiles, mammals and birds in rank. Had they survived to the present day this would have been immediately apparent. Aristotle would never have classed "flying dragons" with the furry, flying animals with the serpents.

Lawson's Texas giant creates problems of an altogether new dimension. Large pterosaurs have been known since the days of the Old West. In 1870 the Yale paleontologist O. C. Marsh unearthed one disproportionately large pterosaur wing fragment in Kansas, and promptly announced that the Mesozoic Earth was populated by "flying dragons" with 20 foot wingspans.

This was spectacularly confirmed the following year when he located a whole wing. His bizarre pterosaur, with a long beak counterbalanced by a plumed crest, was named *Pteranodon* (meaning "winged

and toothless"). For a century it went untraced; Lawson's beast had over twice the wingspan.

Theories surrounding *Pteranodon* were legion. Some supposed that the dense atmosphere of the archaic planet allowed it to float on air. It is now envisaged as a glider, using thermals to gain height. Extreme measures were adopted to facilitate soaring, including drastic weight reduction: it lost its tail and teeth, and reduced its rear legs to trailing spindles. Its bones were hollow tubes with outer walls no thicker than card, the whole structure braced by crosswise struts (principles rediscovered by the aircraft industry). *Pteranodon* had lost so much musculature that it could no longer flap: with 20 foot wings it would have needed 220lb of muscle to hover—it had 8lb left! (Although the wing bones would have sheared long before hovering was achieved.)

Pteranodon's turkey-sized body was all but enveloped by expansive wings, yet the living animal probably weighed no more than 20-40lb. The fuselage was box-like to take the strain of the wings. Wing loading was minimal—about 1lb/sq ft—making it far more efficient than a man-made glider (4lb/sq ft).

Consequently, *Pteranodon* could glide at ultra slow speeds without stalling, only 15 mph according to Cherie Bramwell and G. R. Whitfield of Reading University. Landing at this speed presented no problem, by "flying dragons" with 20 foot wingspans.

Understanding take-off is another matter. Since it was unable to flap or run (the legs trailing) how did it return to the air? Bramwell suggests that a breeze of 15 mph lifted the animal passively off the

ground, like a piece of paper caught by the wind.

Pteranodon must have landed at some stage, if only to breed. It seems unlikely that there were cliffs adjacent to the Kansas sea, so it could not employ them for take-off. The problem appears insurmountable when Lawson's pterosaur is considered. The fossils were found 250 miles inland of the Cretaceous coastline, so this was not a sea-going pterosaur. Perhaps it was a toothless carrion feeder, he ventures, gorging itself on rotting mounds of dinosaur flesh (rendering take-off still more incomprehensible). This implies that there were dinosaurs nearby. Grounded, the ungainly pterosaurs were vulnerable to attack, so how did they escape when danger threatened?

Since they were unable to run, lift-off was vertical. If flapping was involved, they would have needed ludicrously tall legs to permit the 24 foot wings to clear the ground. But with neither the muscles nor mechanical strength, flapping was out of the question. Is it plausible that, with wings extended and elevators raised, they were lifted into the air by the wind? And yet, left at the mercy of the current, escape from the formidable dinosaurs would have been a chancy business.

Lawson's ultimate pterosaur raises more questions than it answers.

Adrian J. Desmond
The author is a member of the department of the History of Science and Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University. (Mr Desmond is currently in England writing a book, *The Hated Dinosaurs*, to be published by Batsford in October at £4.95.)

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Senora Peron stands firm

The popularity of Senora Maria Estella Peron's Government will be the test for the first time, in the subterranean of Argentina, voters at the polls to choose a new government. The so-called "Peronism" is a force throughout Argentina that the Government of Senora Peron is crumbling.

So widespread are the rumours that twice in a week President Peron has publicly denied that a few days ago she asked, "What is the situation in the country's institutions?" Then last night she spent an hour and a half at the headquarters of the General Labour Federation (CGT) trying to convince workers that she did not intend to give in. In a speech that television nationally President Peron told them: "Those who thought the movement was a fragile appearance, but a one can stop me."

From the moment she became President of Argentina last July Senora Peron has been expressed as to her ability to survive in office in a country renowned for its political volatility. A former cabaret dancer, the 44-year-old President has only held one political post before—that of Vice-President to her husband, the late General Juan Domingo Peron, making the chaos and personality of Evita Peron, General Peron's second wife, Isabel Peron has never managed to replace Eva in the affections of Argentina's 25 million people.

Even so, President Peron has survived nine months in office and is not only the most popular woman leader in the world, but also the most popular woman leader in the world. Her survival have been seriously raised. A number of factors have provoked this speculation. The economy is now in poor shape. A drastic reduction in fuel exports, a sharp drop in oil prices, a decrease in Argentine oil production have created a monetary situation in Argentina which the President of the Central Bank has described as critical. The reserves now stand at less than \$100 million, down from \$1.5 billion three years ago. The peso was recently devalued and inflation is rampant. Many essential goods, held to artificially low prices by government decree, are hard to obtain and are being sold on the black market. Other items not subject to control are soaring in price, rapidly outstripping wage increases.

The gloom in the economic field is matched by despair in the political arena. It has escalated in the past nine months and shows no signs of abating either in the towns or the countryside. This year alone over 140 people have been killed as a result of political violence. The Right and the Left, and since the armed forces have been engaged in a full-scale guerrilla operation in the north of Argentina where the Marxist People's Revolutionary Army are fighting.

The violence is not the only reason for the present level of dissatisfaction with the government of President Peron. The focus of most discontent is Jose Lopez Rega, the minister of social welfare and the President's personal secretary. This 56-year-old lawyer-like figure, in effect, running Argentina, is believed to make all the political decisions for the President, and he always accompanies her to meetings with the military and the armed forces. Lopez Rega has been in exile for three years. His main interest in life until now has been astrology, on which he has written three books.

The supporters of Lopez Rega seem to be few but his enemies are legion. The Peronist Old Guard detest him because he is a relative newcomer to the Peronist ranks. Lopez Rega only had been involved with Peron and Peronism during Peron's exile in Madrid in the sixties. The Left wing of the Peronist party hold equally strong feelings about Lopez Rega, considering him responsible for the swing to the Right by the Peronist movement and the expulsion of the Left from the Peronist party.

Outside the Peronist movement, feelings run equally high. The latest incident to provoke criticism is the appointment of politicians was the visit of Lopez Rega to Missions in March when he distributed cheque worth almost two million pounds to help the needy and get voters to support him. This provoked the leader of the Radical Party, Ricardo Balbin, to speak openly of an attempt to buy the electorate. Dissatisfaction with Lopez Rega has also been voiced privately by congress officers and by the press. The press has been involved in the spread of rumours of a military coup d'etat. But senior officers have kept quiet on the subject.

Much of the discontent, however, with President Peron would disappear if she were to dismiss Lopez Rega. A recent article in the Argentine press, written by a Peronist, said that Lopez Rega has so openly involved himself in the election campaign. But for the moment President Peron shows no sign of doing so. President Peron has dismissed the rumours that her government was crumbling and Lopez Rega standing by her side.

Jo Beresford

That other time of crisis when ministers agreed to differ

Ministers have agreed to differ on the Common Market. From now until the Referendum the arguments on both sides will be presented by leaders of the same Party and members of the same Cabinet. The constitutional doctrine of Cabinet responsibility will be accepted. It is a strange but not quite unprecedented situation. The last agreement to differ was in November, 1931.

The National Government with Ramsay MacDonald at its head and the support of the Conservative and Liberal parties (except for Lloyd George and his family) had been returned with an overwhelming majority. The Labour opposition was reduced to a rump of 46 members. Never, it appeared, had an administration received such an overwhelming vote of confidence from the electorate. Yet, almost immediately, a deep fissure appeared. The Government had been left conveniently in abeyance. But the overwhelming Conservative majority of 471 members were convinced protectionists and believed that import duties were the only answer to the economic crisis which had threatened the stability of the pound. The Liberal Nationals, led by Sir Herbert Samuel, were prepared to abandon the free-trade policy of the House of Commons. Indeed, with one or two exceptions, they became the obedient camp followers of the Tories. But the orthodox Liberals, led by Sir Herbert Samuel, occupied a very different place in the House of Commons. From them there came the hereditary of Bright, Cobden and Gladstone, was still the ark of the covenant.

Moreover, they were not alone. They were ranged with Lord Snowden, the most inflexible of free traders. And Lord Snowden had done more to win the election than any other single man. His personal integrity was universally respected. These were the early days of sound broadcasting when radio was taking the place of the public meeting. Lord Snowden's broadcasts were immensely effective. I

was Liberal candidate for Dundee and received a letter of support from Lord Snowden. I issued one poster: "Take Snowden's advice and vote for Foot". To my own astonishment and that of everybody else I was elected with a majority of 19,000 votes.

The Government were presented with a frightful dilemma: Could they, after only a few weeks, dispute not only with the Liberals but with Lord Snowden himself? The Government were set upon import duties. The unyielding free traders would not give way. After long and agonised discussion the Cabinet (of which I was a member) decided to support the Government. The House of Commons was in the House of Lords. But the Liberal Ministers in the House of Commons were to be permitted to speak and vote against the new tariffs. I agreed to do no work out quite as expected. It was generally anticipated that the dissenting Liberal Ministers would content themselves with something in the nature of a formal protest. This is not what happened. Sir Herbert Samuel spoke on December 10th. He was always an accomplished debater. But on this occasion he delivered the most powerful speech of his career. It was described by Baldwin's biographers as "a vehement attack that stupefied the House". It was received with fury on the Conservative benches. They went into the lobby in a state of seething indignation. Sir Robert Vansittart reminded Baldwin of a popular song 40 years before.

"It makes me feel that life's a blank
A disgusting dreary blank
It's exactly what I see
It's the nasty way I see it."

But Samuel did not escape attack. From a different quarter. One of the speakers in the debate was Megan Lloyd George. She was, without exception, the most effective woman speaker I have ever sat in the House of Commons. On this occasion she excoriated Samuel and his colleagues who

had remained in the National Government after Lloyd George had withdrawn his support. She described Samuel as addressing the corpse of free trade in the language of Mark Anthony over the body of Caesar:

"Oh pardon me thou bleeding piece of earth
That I am meek and gentle with these butchers."

Baldwin, who wound up the debate, referred to her speech and described Samuel as saying, like Glendower, "Heaven deliver me from this Welsh fairy".

A single day was allotted for the completion of the fourth stage and the third reading of the Bill. It was arranged that there should only be three third readings. My father, Isaac Foot, the Liberal Minister for Mines, was to speak from the front bench for the dissenting Liberals.

The report stage dragged on through the afternoon and evening and Isaac Foot was told that he must confine his speech to six minutes. In this brief space he had to express the free trade convictions of a lifetime. That he succeeded in doing so was shown by the response he obtained. When he sat down, the Conservative benches, led by Lord Winterston, with both fists above his head, rose as one man, shouting "Resign—resign". Chamberlain described the speech as "the last despairing cry of one who knows that he has seen the end of free trade".

The Liberals remained in the Government until the following autumn. They finally resigned over the Ottawa agreements which provided for a more or less permanent system of imperial preference. But even if they had not done so it is difficult to suppose that the coalition could have lasted. The parties had been temporarily brought together by the alleged economic crisis of August 1931, and the threat to the pound. There was no permanent basis of unity. There is no analogy with the present state of affairs.

Dingle Foot

A survey carried out by the Gillette Market Research Department has been publicized recently as a contribution to the debate whether or not one-day cricket has led to practices that make us a chopping block for the Australians in Test cricket. Commented on two on that subject is called for, but first the survey as a whole, taking a broad look at present-day sporting activity (so far as a sample of only 577 will allow), deserves wider attention.

The survey confirms that football leads the way in almost every aspect of public interest. With support among three men out of four (the survey does not say whether it was confined to men because this was their particular field or because they are the main users of the company's product), football has even strengthened its position when nearly every other sport has lost ground, this in spite of the ravages of Manchester United's supporters and the anti-social kind. The leading positions for 1974, as revealed as a percentage of those canvassed, are given in the following table, together with those for 1973 (sample of 718) and 1972 (sample 751):

	1974	1973	1972
Football	76.3	73.8	74.8
Boxing	47.8	47.5	—
Cricket	42.1	47.1	45.0
Athletics	40.4	44.6	47.1

No other sport achieves four main positions. Golf, previously above the level of 41.2 has declined to 36.0 (and sixth position), second only to Rugby League in this loss of general support. Yet with 11.3 (all figures here are given as percentages of the sample) it is surpassed only by football, and not by all that much (15.1), among those who actually practice sport. It also leads in "Follows in other ways" (1.6), which might explain the popularity of the nineteenth century Rugby League. The chief sufferer, has dropped from 26.3 to 20.5, in spite of the live BBC coverage it receives on most Saturday afternoons during the winter. Thus it may well be the game may be linked to over-exposure on television as a survey commissioned by the

game's administrators maintained a few years ago. Only three sports among the 17 included in the Gillette list (speedway and car rallies have been excluded from the accompanying table) have improved their positions among the watching, reading and talking public. Tennis, golf, football and boxing (see table) in this happy situation, moving up substantially from 36.1 to 39.7, thereby perhaps refuting the argument that there is now so much tennis, so professionally promoted, that the currency has been debased. Among the debased, are three and a half from the bottom of the poll with 0.3, which may add some sociological footnote to the debate about violence on our television screens.

Circulation managers of newspapers and their sports editors will study with special interest the figures alongside the section devoted to the press. It seems that, except in one instance, we may have got our priorities right, for by and large the amount of space deployed on our sports pages (though not in any one particular newspaper) would probably arrive at the same ranking list as Gillette, with football on 57.2, boxing on 26.3, and cricket on 21.5. No other sport reaches 20 per cent.

The exception to the general rule is racing, because, if the

	Assoc. Football	Athletics	Boxing	Cricket	Cycling	Golf	Horse Racing	Motor Racing	Rugby League	Rugby Union	Sailing	Shooting	Swimming	Tennis
1972 Any Interest	74.8	47.1	47.5	42.1	45.0	36.0	33.0	28.4	25.4	10.0	24.4	24.8	10.0	33.8
1973 Any Interest	73.8	44.6	47.5	42.1	45.0	36.0	33.0	28.4	25.4	10.0	24.4	24.8	10.0	33.8

Current Survey (1974)

Takes any form of interest in

Takes part in

Follows on T.V./Radio

Follows in press

Goes to meetings/matches

Follows in other ways

Follows in other ways

Follows in other ways

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Sportview Who watches what, and where

	Assoc. Football	Athletics	Boxing	Cricket	Cycling	Golf	Horse Racing	Motor Racing	Rugby League	Rugby Union	Sailing	Shooting	Swimming	Tennis
1972 Any Interest	74.8	47.1	47.5	42.1	45.0	36.0	33.0	28.4	25.4	10.0	24.4	24.8	10.0	33.8
1973 Any Interest	73.8	44.6	47.5	42.1	45.0	36.0	33.0	28.4	25.4	10.0	24.4	24.8	10.0	33.8

Current Survey (1974)

Takes any form of interest in

Takes part in

Follows on T.V./Radio

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	Assoc. Football	Athletics	Boxing	Cricket	Cycling	Golf	Horse Racing	Motor Racing	Rugby League	Rugby Union	Sailing	Shooting	Swimming	Tennis
1972 Any Interest	74.8	47.1	47.5	42.1	45.0	36.0	33.0	28.4	25.4	10.0	24.4	24.8	10.0	33.8
1973 Any Interest	73.8	44.6	47.5	42.1	45.0	36.0	33.0	28.4	25.4	10.0	24.4	24.8	10.0	33.8

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The worst of the referendum mischief may be yet to come

It is bad enough that Mr Wilson should have made such a rod for his own back by restoring to the process of a national referendum over membership of the EEC and then invited further mischief by his indulgent "dispensation" to those pillars of the Government who are out to frustrate his intentions. What is equally unfortunate is that the Wilsonian rod is afflicting so many others, most painfully the majority of his ministers, who do actually support his European policy and are trying to uphold him in the face of his self-imposed handicap.

But the worst punishment may not be exacted until after the referendum. What if the answer should be No to Europe, and we are voted out?

In that event, Mr Wilson himself would probably have to resign, becoming the principal individual victim of the people's will as expressed in their repudiation of his explicit recommendation. To speak of carrying out the verdict and carrying out the verdict would surely prove impracticable. In honour, Mr Callaghan, Mr Jenkins, Mr Healey, Mrs Williams and other members of the Cabinet might feel obliged to go with him, leaving Mr Wedgwood Benn and his confederates in possession.

That is not all. What would Mrs Thatcher do, and Mr

Thorp? Must the Conservative and Liberal leadership then stand on their heads, disowning the convictions of recent years? They could not do so and keep their reputations. Nor would they contemplate such a disavowal of past principle and commitment.



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THE BASIS OF AMERICAN POWER

President Ford did his best on Thursday night to restore faith in the foreign policy of the United States. He succeeded only to a limited extent. He could not erase images of what is happening in Vietnam, or his own inept response from the golf course, or does he appear to have won over Congress. But there will be no sudden world-wide loss of confidence in the United States if South Vietnam collapses. People are mostly perceptive enough to understand the difference between Vietnam and other areas of American interest. They also see that the acceptance of failure in one area does not lead automatically to loss of will everywhere.

On the other hand there is no doubt that the United States is going through a very difficult phase and that its position in the world could be badly eroded over the next few years if it does not discover a role which it can pursue with confidence and reasonable degree of political unity. The width of the present rift between the Executive and Congress means that the Executive cannot negotiate effectively with foreign governments because nobody can be sure whether it will be backed by Congress. It is a situation reminiscent of the time when Congress refused to ratify membership of the League of Nations.

The present Congress was elected under the influence of the Watergate scandal. It contains a high proportion of new young Democrats. The next Congress may revert to more familiar patterns, and new members will gain experience. The Presidency can also be expected to retain some of its old powers. But the old system of autocratic leadership within Congress is probably destroyed for the foreseeable future, and so is the freedom which past presidents have enjoyed in committing American armed forces to action. Congress is now a more democratic body with greater powers to control the Executive. In principle this is a good thing but it demands of Congressmen a high degree of maturity and a wider knowledge of international affairs.

Les dominant

Meanwhile the role of American power in the world will come under closer scrutiny. In all respects this power is now less dominant than it was. Militarily the Soviet Union has gained appreciable parity. Elsewhere the possession of nuclear weapons is spreading. Economically the dollar no longer plays the role it did. Dr. Kissinger has not reversed this trend. He rightly reacted against the world-wide ideological commitments of President Kennedy and sought a policy

based more on older European ideas of the balance of power, but by rejecting the (sometimes disastrous) moral element in American policy he also opened the door to the very practical political implications which follow from America's ability to move men's minds and inspire moral and political loyalty.

As an element in policy this is probably more important at a time when the primary threat to the West is not from hostile military groupings but from the internal failure of confidence and institutions. Even the security of Europe depends not only on the presence of American forces but also on the belief of the Europeans in the political system which these forces represent. To this extent the values which are expressed both in American society and in American foreign policy are important to American security.

This must be just as much a part of a reconsideration of America's role in the world as the more selective cultivation of commitments. The United States no longer has the political or military power to control events everywhere. Nor are its political ideas directly applicable everywhere. But it still convinces people of the success of its political system and of its basic dedication to freedom, justice, and social progress. It will not be by any means without influence.

Stronger

It could even become stronger if it gives up some of its imperial policy for a slightly narrower definition of national interests—provided the definition is not too narrow. It need not be, and judging by President Ford's speech, it is not. The isolationist doctrines were exploited by two world wars. Even world-weary Americans will not easily forget the lessons and will see that the security of the United States depends on a network of relationships with countries bound by cultural affinity, geographical proximity, economic interests and strategic importance. They will also see that a Europe abandoned by the United States would probably not rally to its own defence but rush into a variety of accommodations with the Soviet Union.

Thus, although the mood in the United States is going through an isolationist phase, and the old eastern establishment has lost its decisive influence over foreign policy, the future need not be as bleak as is sometimes made out. Indeed, if the lessons of the Vietnam tragedy are taken to heart, the resurgent foreign policy of the United States could emerge as more realistic, more consistent, and therefore in the end more effective.

THE DAR ES SALAAM DECLARATION

The meeting of Organization of African Unity foreign ministers in Dar es Salaam has agreed to give negotiations a further chance to produce a settlement in Rhodesia but recommends preparations for reversion to guerrilla war in case they do not. No time limit is set and the outcome tests the needs and wishes of our states which have worked or detente—Zambia, Tanzania, Botswana and Mozambique, which will join OAU when fully independent in June but is an essential factor in the equation now. The African National Council's leaders will return to Salisbury to renew contacts with Mr Smith, though whether Mr Mchale will return to detention, or take charge of the ANC's office in Tanzania remains to be seen. Mr Smith might be glad if he broke parole.

Mr Smith cannot now put off the formal constitutional conference much longer. His regime and chairmanship must be settled soon. He has prepared the ground to some extent by his warnings last week that Rhodesians must accept the rise of native black leaders. But this is only a tiny step in the unravel-

ling of the 1969 constitution and ten years of Front legislation. The Zanu guerrillas will now be expected to take their cue and confine themselves to consolidating their position in local areas in Rhodesia and eschew violence. Mr Vorster has yet to confirm that he is withdrawing his policy, but it looks as if the OAU decision and that withdrawal were part of an unofficial bargain. The departure of the South Africans can have a constructive effect on all but the most bigoted Rhodesian opinion, which will now feel alone in meeting the black challenge. The military position, however, will not necessarily be altered.

Mr Vorster's satisfaction will be tempered by the hostile recommendations in the rest of the "Declaration". He has promptly turned down the demand that the militant Swapo "nationalist" party shall be recognized as the sole representative of the people of Namibia (South West Africa). To do otherwise would be to invalidate the elections from which Swapo were excluded. It may not follow that he will persist in the original plan to create eight weakbantustans in the trust territory leaving the Afrikaner-German settlers in control of its best areas. So far Mr Vorster has shown no inclination to get as tough with them as he has with the Rhodesians.

His hopes that more "normal" relations with black Africa would form part of the understanding have been snubbed. The Afrikaners call for a tighter oil embargo, the banning of South African ships, planes and tourists (and that call at South Africa and the phasing out of the migrant labour in South Africa mines. It was noted that somebody ought to pay for the cost of all this. So far from widening the dialogue, President Tolbert was politely reprimanded for stepping out of line and the exclusion of South Africa from the United Nations is to be pursued relentlessly.

Mr Vorster will therefore have to make his domestic changes against a background of African hostility. The ministers saw no wisdom in making a hard task (which Mr Vorster alone could even attempt) a trace easier. The sporadic declaration need not all be taken at its face value. South African reactions may be less subtle than that, but Mr Vorster has to think five years or more ahead.

responsibly, prepared such rules, incorporating all the necessary safeguards—advance notification of proceedings in private, admission of expert witnesses as of right, and so on. Twenty-five pages ensured that the injustices in Wiltshire could never recur.

But those rules were stillborn. They were never laid before Parliament. Instead the Secretary of State, by now Lord Peter Walker, announced: "It is Government policy that inspectors should in future not accede to requests that they should hear evidence in private at planning inquiries." Yet the damage had been done. By then the company had been admitted to Wiltshire.

We all make mistakes. But when a civil servant is shown to have made a mistake which causes injury to the public, it is the clear duty of Ministers—Lord Greenwood, Lord Hailsham, Mr Walker and Mr Croft—to acknowledge it, and to make amends. The original appeal should not have been allowed. Having been allowed, it should have been rescinded. But there has been no redress, no public investigation, no word of apology.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL HAMILTON,
House of Commons.
April 7.

The orphans of Vietnam

From Miss Anna Yee-Yu Minall
Sir, I am now twelve, but when I was 14 months old I was flown from Hongkong by International Social Services. I don't remember anything about Hongkong but I know I was in an orphanage.

Now I have a family of my own, so I am glad I came to England. I love painting and drawing and go to many exhibitions both of Chinese and English work. I would like rather to be here with my adopted family than in a Chinese orphanage.

Yours faithfully,
ANNA YEE-YU MINALL,
The Vicarage,
Church Street,
Stroud, Gloucestershire.
April 10.

From Mr Charles F. Moreira
Sir, In your Editorial in The Times, April 8, 1975, you brought up a false and misleading argument that the Vietnamese orphans would find difficulty adjusting to a different culture from that in which they were born. From what I see on the television, these orphans are mostly below six years old. It is pure common sense that children below the age of six or even ten are only superficially aware of their ethnic, religious, cultural or nationalistic status.

I don't see any reason why, if brought up in a British background, these children should not adapt to British culture when they are older. But if it is the parents' duty to bring up their children as British, then it is up to the parents to accept that they are British to accept that they are British to accept that they are British.

Yours faithfully,
CHARLES MOREIRA,
University of Salford Union,
Salford.
April 9.

From Mr John Stokes, Conservative MP for Halesowen and Stourbridge
Sir, The fears expressed in many quarters about the difficulties of orphans from Vietnam settling in the totally different environment of this country apply in far greater measure to the children of immigrants and to immigrants themselves. It is not this something which is new, but it is something which we must carefully before allowing such vast numbers of immigrants and their children to settle in this country against the wishes of the indigenous population who understand so well the real problems involved.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN STOKES,
House of Commons.
April 9.

From Mrs Irma McDonnell
Sir, Your Editorial (April 9) talks of the Americans assuming their guilt, and Dr Patricia Penn's letter (April 8) of the Americans saving thousands of orphans by the airlift of Vietnamese orphans.

America took on the cause of democracy in Vietnam, and because they did not succeed received little thanks for it. Their attempt to rescue these children is perhaps misguided, but at least Dr Griffin's letter today (April 10) suggests. However, it seems they will not be allowed any generous motives for it.

It is interesting that no mention is made of Vietnam's guilt.

Yours faithfully,
IRMA McDONNELL,
Slane,
2 Sandown Grove,
Tunbridge Wells, Kent.
April 10.

Referendum issues: the student vote

From Mr David Satterthwaite
Sir, May I as a recent member of a university student council express my scepticism about press reports that the new Left Coalition, dominated by the National Union of Students' Executive, will persuade the student body of Britain to vote solidly for leaving the European Community? From my experience, the leaders of student unions—largely drawn from Social Science faculties—tend to concentrate their attention upon issues in a highly manipulative fashion. For instance, they will discuss at length the finer points of Marxist doctrine or whether to support the IRA while showing little interest in trying to improve the conditions of local student life. The result is a massive lack of interest on the part of the general student body and leaves the NUS leadership wholly unrepresentative.

It is doubtful therefore whether any campaign they mount against the Common Market will have much effect. Yet it is surely tragic that students should be urged, from any source, to vote against the conquest of a type of national sovereignty which has produced the riches from which the two most destructive wars in human history. Surely young people all have a stake in the wider community of man.

Yours truly,
DAVID SATTERTHWAITE,
Chichester, Sussex.
April 9.

From Mr R. E. G. Simmerson
Sir, It is commonplace these days to hear that the miners and their union have the rest of us in a stranglehold and that they are in a position to extract any wages they care to name for their services.

This is, of course, nonsense; if the miners appear to have such a stranglehold then it is only because successive governments have repeatedly thrust the collective throat of the nation into their grasp. In particular Conservative governments could have broken this hold at any time simply by allowing the import of foreign coal and reducing taxes on alternative fuels.

Government have not so far chosen to exercise their power but while we were a self-ruling nation, there was at least a chance that one might see the wisdom of such a course.

But if we are to remain in the Common Market then all hope is lost: the Eurocrats are much more order must, however, ask themselves what other services are available to rise in price by a smaller percentage during a 12 month period. Even at the new level of rates, an average householder with a rateable value of about £275 will likely have to meet a bill for county services which is no higher than the average expenditure on alcohol or tobacco or the cost of 23 gallons of petrol a week. This is not an excessive price to pay for education, road, police, fire, health, social services and the many other services provided by local government.

Our critics also speak wildly of massive over-staffing. May I again quote some Hampshire figures. The total number of posts including both county and district council services in Hampshire has risen by 5 per cent in the 12 month period covering reorganization. This is a smaller rise than we have normally been experiencing annually over the last few years as a result of the expansion of services which are most relevant, is determined largely by legislation and central government directives. Most of the authorities have, either because suitable staff are not available, or by self-denying policy decisions, kept many posts vacant even though the local authority is short of staff. In this county 10 per cent of all posts are still empty.

In effect, therefore, there has been no increase in staff numbers simply as a result of reorganization except in the planning services which was provided by Parliament between the new counties and districts. Any growth in numbers arises not from reorganization but from the inexhaustible demands for local authority services. If there has to be continued economy, the restraints must be on the public rather than on the local authorities into extra expenditure.

Yours faithfully,
PORCHESTER, Chairman,
Hampshire County Council,
The Castle,
Winchester.
April 10.

Exorcism: medicine and religion

From Mr John V. Nicholas
Sir, Professor Trethowan (March 31) may consider it a medieval mumbo-jumbo "but from my view read, there are important lessons to be learnt from both "possession" which and the ritual of exorcism. These exorcistic experiences can provide us with valuable psychological insights into the malfunctioning of the psyche. It matters little whether we call it "possession" or a "psychosis" or "hysteria" or "demonic possession" or "psychic attack". None of these labels further our knowledge of its psychogenesis. Nor is it fruitful to condemn either the therapeutic methods of religions or those of psychiatry. Both have their successes and failures.

Modern medicine has become highly technical, specialized and able to deal with a wide range of ailments. It has become a split off from its original religious roots. The exorcism of the unconscious is still a largely unknown, unexplored territory lying beyond our conscious control of time, space and causality. The inner of this world were studied by both Freud and Jung, although the latter went beyond the personal realm into that of the collective unconscious.

There has always been a striving towards this realm in all cultures throughout history. It has been dramatically expressed in certain mystery rites celebrating ritual death and rebirth. What motivates man in this direction seems to be a deep spiritual force derived from the unconscious and collective condition which expresses a basic psychic need to transcend the purely personal.

Western man, especially, has tended to shift the emphasis towards materialism, technology, power and wealth. When these modern idols cease to bring satisfaction, an *exorcismus* sets in which is evidenced by the present day fascination with the occult. In the ancient mysteries modern man seeks the answer to the riddle that is himself.

What is the answer, the second, what Rudolf Otto called, "the Wholly Other" and Jung, the "numinous" is vitally important for man's psychic health. The manifestations of this psychic activity are alternatively felt to be either "demonic" or "divine". It is only through an integration of these unconscious images that the fragmentary alienated ego-consciousness becomes a psychic whole. The more man is split off from the other side, is unconscious, the more he is liable to outbursts of affect and obsessions.

Such a person complains, "I don't know what ails me. I was not myself. I don't know what the devil got into me". All of these expressions of conflict are the result of a "possession" of the person's self. Man is no longer a free agent, no longer master in his house. Jung always maintained that although it was common knowledge that we all have complexes, it was far more important to realize that the complexes can also have us.

Sincerely,
JOHN V. NICHOLAS,
30b Heath Drive, NW3
April 5.

Preserving Pylots

From Mrs Helen Phillips
Sir, It is good to realize that the National Trust for Greece, through the agency of Mr Robin Fedden, is concerned about "preserving Pylots".

As a Pilot who has never lost contact, I must plead the cause of the Pylots who are there. They are united in their support of the industrialization plan which would keep the area alive and stop the exodus of their children to foreign parts. It is a pity that the Pylots decided, painfully indeed, to betray their traditional loyalties and ask for the right to survive.

It is surely possible for the Government to conceive a compromise between an "economically desirable development" and the preservation of history and natural beauty.

Yours very sincerely,
HELEN PHILLIPS,
Flar 10,
16 Montagu Street, W1.
April 3.

Oldest boat club

From Mr E. M. Noyes
Sir, I fear that the outing, for it was no more than that, reported by Mr H. M. Stewart of St John's College (April 9) can be greatly ante-dated: At some time in the tenth century, the exact date is not known, it is reported that King Edgar, called "The Peaceable", was conveyed in great state on the Cheshire River Dee from his palace the West Chester to the Church of St John and back again, the crew being eight Kings, while King Edgar himself steered.

The account of this expedition is given by William of Malmesbury, and quoted in the history of the Royal Chester Rowing Club.

Yours faithfully,
E. M. NOYES,
Royal Chester RC Vice-President,
Adcroft,
16 Birde Hill Drive,
Oatley, Surrey.
April 9.

Minerals in Wiltshire

From Mr Michael Hamilton, Conservative MP for Salisbury
Sir, A few days ago you reported that Mr Crosland, Secretary of State for the Environment, had given approval for a further ten years of mineral working near Salisbury. Two years one way or another matter little, and the countryside has been damaged before. What is unacceptable is that even a remote village should suffer from the unbridled greed of a handful of senior Ministers. The facts are simple and well documented.

The excavating company was originally admitted to Wiltshire by processes which were without precedent and without justice. Two or three days before the inquiry called by the company, the company representatives of the company called by appointment at the Department in London, concerned for the confidentiality of their secret processes. Although no part of a planning inquiry had ever been held in private, the civil servants informed them that an inspector had been sent to the site, and that they should apply for such procedures when the time came. They were thus able to prepare their case for an *in camera* hearing.

On the appointed day the inquiry opened in Salisbury. What could have gone wrong. The Minister had

warned nobody. Local people were taken aback; they had no opportunity to prepare a defence against this unique procedure. The inspector, alerted before leaving London, acceded to the request that the central evidence be heard in private. An expert witness was excluded because the company objected to his presence.

And thus—as Lord Brooke of Camoor was later to make clear in the House of Lords—there was no opportunity for the objectors to bring geological evidence to rebut the evidence given on behalf of the company in secret. Permission to quarry followed, and thus was admission to Wiltshire first obtained.

The Minister in charge of the Department at the time, now Lord Greenwood of Rossendale, was innocent of these events. He was never consulted. Nor was his Permanent Secretary, Mr Kenneth Stevenson. As Sir Kenneth admitted later: "As to the details of the ruling, I am not really terribly well equipped to answer."

Fortunately the Council on Tribunals grasped the situation clearly. When the case was presented to them, they recommended that new rules for planning inquiries be needed to take account of *in camera* hearings. So the Lord Chancellor, by now Lord Hailsham, to whom the Council on Tribunals were

For Saving
Investing and
House-Purchase

HALIFAX
BUILDING SOCIETY

Societies accept mortgage curbs to prevent house prices surge

By Margaret Stone

Against the background of a record inflow of funds—net receipts of £274m for March were reported yesterday—the Government and the building societies have formalised their arrangements for introducing restrictive controls for home loans.

The Building Societies Association and the Government have agreed that the big surge of investment in building societies coupled with the pent-up demand for home loans for the mortgage famine of 1974 will trigger another round of unacceptable house price increases.

Under the terms of the Joint Advisory Committee, set up by a Government and the association in September, 1973, the building societies have agreed to arrange their lending policies in line with the JAC's recommendations as to the necessary volume of lending needed to encourage builders without using the housing market to release funds.

Mr. Anthony Crossland, Secretary of State for the Environment, has welcomed the new scheme in spite of the fact that it represents a victory for the building societies against his own plan for a formal statutory fund.

This idea of the societies putting surplus funds into a central pool to be unlocked in times of mortgage shortage was finally abandoned on the grounds that it would involve government subsidies.

In practice the new plan will make very little difference to the operations of individual

building societies, who for years have used their own liquidity levels as means of ironing out the peaks and troughs of mortgage funds.

However, because of the more efficient and wider-based monitoring of house prices, new housing starts and other factors by the JAC, action will probably be taken more quickly than in the past.

At the moment there is little evidence that house prices are beginning to "take off" again, despite the record lending of societies this year. In a survey published earlier this week by the National Building Society, new house prices were shown to have risen 1.5 per cent in the first quarter of this year while second-hand houses were upvalued by 3 per cent.

So it appears unlikely that the new scheme will be operating in a negative way by reducing mortgage funds at the moment. Indeed the statement issued yesterday by the Department of the Environment indicates that the level of lending could be higher than at present.

March proved a record month all round for the building societies. Net receipts were an all-time high of £274m against the previous record of £240m in January. A record of £248m was lent to home buyers and a further £294m promised to mortgage applicants.

As expected, no decision was taken at yesterday's meeting of the council of the association in respect of interest rates. The council will be holding a special meeting in the week after the Budget to determine whether the investment rate should be reduced, which might in turn mean a reduction in the mortgage interest rate.

Loss-maker Piorelli may raise capital

Our Financial Staff

Speculation is increasing in Italy that an imminent capital raising exercise is being planned by Piorelli S.p.A., the public Italian operating company of the Dunlop-Piirelli tyre, which yesterday revealed loss for 1974 of 11,300m lire (about £7.5m).

Announcing the loss, which compares with one of 16,000m in 1973, the board said it feared the financial structure of the company needed to be proved.

The two years' losses together have exceeded a third of the company's capital, reducing it to 7,000m lire. An extraordinary meeting of shareholders has been called for April 29 to discuss the situation. Piorelli spokesman declined to comment on suggestions that a capital-raising operation was contemplated.

The company, which is 51 per cent owned by Dunlop, had improved industrial operating performance had been offset by an exceptional rise in interest rates.

A capital issue by Piorelli S.p.A. was not necessarily inevitable. It was agreed in 1973 that Piorelli would assume financial responsibility for Dunlop's Piorelli and its increase in Dunlop's £41.5m investment could be considered until the company had returned to profitability.

However, if Piorelli injects new funds Dunlop will retain a 51 per cent.

Coats Paton closing 211 wool shops

By Maurice Corbin

Coats Paton, the textiles group, is to close down its chain of 211 Coats Paton Wool Shops, which have been trading since 1954. The group will have ceased trading by September.

This is the first real sign of the economic squeeze, already hitting manufacturing, reaching down into the retail trade. More than 1,000 people will lose jobs, blamed on high operating costs.

Bellman's founded 66 years ago, will shut 10 stores today and another closures will follow.

Mr. Graham Watt, managing director of Bellman's, said that the group's wool shops, which were a subsidiary of Coats Paton (Retail), had been a loss-making operation.

"Other companies may well find themselves in a similar position if profits cannot compete with increased expenses," he said.

A spokesman for the parent group said the retail operations were just not profitable any more and that the group's decision had led to the closure of the shops.

However, it was hoped to expand retail operations later of the group's Country Casuals chain.

Bellman's shops have usually been in small but convenient premises, specialising in woollen and sewing products of all kinds and related goods. It is the biggest chain of its kind, but specialist shops in this sector of retailing have been fast disappearing, with department stores and others introducing their own wool sections.

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CITY OF WESTMINSTER ASSURANCE

Parting protest over Aston Martin deal

By David Young

Talks are to be held within the next few days between the new Anglo-American Canadian ownership of Aston Martin and the trade unions to discuss the resumption of production of the prestige V8 sports coupe and the four-door Lagonda version unveiled at the last Motor Show.

Company Development, the Birmingham-based group which placed the company into receivership in the last week of 1974, yesterday formally accepted the offer made for it by the consortium formed by Mr. Peter Sprague, of California, Mr. George Minden, a Canadian, and Mr. Jeremy Turner, a London businessman.

The statement issued yesterday by Mr. William Wilson, Company Development's chairman, accepting the offer, typified the bitterness which has coloured the negotiations. Mr. Wilson described the consortium as "the Sprague Circus," and said that the offer was totally inadequate. Company Development would accept the offer as far as its investment was concerned, but provided the secured creditors were prepared to accept 7p to 10p in the £ in complete settlement of funds due to them.

A statement yesterday Mr. Wilson said: "The immediate effect of this is that Company Development receives £500,000 in settlement for £750,000, the preferential creditors are paid in full and the unsecured creditors receive 7p to 10p in the £."

"This decision is being conveyed to the American circus and the contract of sale has been called for."

The informal committee of Aston Martin creditors and Mr. Michael Clark, the receiver, agreed to accept the offer, which is estimated to be worth a total of £1,050,000—a week ago.

The first task of the new owners will be to re-recruit the skilled labour force which worked in the Newport Pagnal factory.

A nucleus of workers are still operating at the service department completing the 30 cars which were in course of production when work at the main plant was halted.

Mr. Jeremy Turner said last night: "The consortium has been described by Mr. Wilson as 'American', but this is the case. The fact that the new Aston Martin Company will be a British company, building a great British car and we hope that production will begin as soon as possible."

Small rally by sterling against \$

Sterling weakened further on the foreign exchange yesterday but managed a small rally in the afternoon. Dealers said selling of the pound was not heavy, and the currency tended to weaken progressively on a "this market" basis.

By noon the pound's "effective rate" against 10 key currencies (compared with three years ago) had worsened from the overnight level of 21.9 per cent to 22.2 per cent—or within an ace of its all-time worst level of 22.1 per cent.

However, by the close of trading it was again back to 21.9 per cent. The pound even showed a final net advance against the dollar, closing at \$2.3660, up 0.35 cent.

Budget nerves take toll of gilt-edged

Stock markets had another cautious session as the City braced itself for Budget day. Gilt-edged stocks remained nervous as rumours circulated regarding the possible size of the Government borrowing requirement that will be disclosed on Tuesday. In equities, turnover was thin but share prices managed to hold firm.

The FT index closed 1.1 up at 295.5, a fall of a mere 0.2 on the week. Investors in London have been unsettled this week by indications that United States interest rates may be about to rise again.

Investor's week, page 19

Citibank holds prime

First National City Bank of New York announced yesterday that it is holding its prime lending rate at 7 1/4 per cent. The announcement came as little surprise in view of the present relative stability of money market rates and the continuing capital market tension.

Air travel licences

The Civil Aviation Authority has granted air travel operators licences for the period ending March 31, 1975, to: Executive Travel, Gower Travel, Majorcan Apartments and Holiday Services, Sky Travel (London), Waymark Holidays, Sport and Travel, Air Marketing International, Grandpian Travel, Asian Gold, Libra Travel Holidays, Holiday Villas, Turavia International Holidays and Fryer Travel.

ENI dispute

The heading on an item about a dispute in the Italian chemical industry in yesterday's Business News should have referred to ENI, not EMI.

BSC production heads for 25pc fall

By Ronald Faux

Sir Monty Finniston, chairman of the British Steel Corporation, said yesterday that steel production in Britain could drop by 25 per cent in a matter of weeks, and repeated his warning that redundancies in the industry were inevitable.

But he assured leaders of the Scottish TUC at a meeting in Glasgow that the recession was not being used as an excuse for early closure of old steel plants. The recession in Britain was very serious but the misery would be shared throughout all

the regions of the United Kingdom.

There were various measures of work-sharing and early retirement already being discussed with the workforce to soften the blow of rationalization, he said.

"Recession is not peculiar to us. It is happening throughout the whole world. They have already gone over the cliff in Germany where production is 35 per cent less, and the Japanese are already down to 25 per cent compared with the same period last year."

The corporation was discussing measures with the workforce at local level to reduce the impact of this decline on their

employment, but it was quite clear the corporation could not sustain workforces if the production was not there.

Sir Monty expected a fall of about 25 per cent in production on average. The galvanized sheet industry had already "gone completely"; there is no demand at all. Orders for sheet steel used in car production had fallen and the only side of the industry which was booming was tubular steel and material for North Sea oil production.

The corporation was working on the assumption that there would be no sign of a recession in the economy until the end of

this year, or possibly into 1976.

Two things could change this situation, an injection of money into the American economy, or a reflationary Budget from Mr. Healey. Sir Monty pointed out that the German steel sector was receiving the benefit of tax relief and help with capital investment.

In a joint press statement from the corporation and the Scottish TUC, the unions said they accepted that the effect on manpower of the recession was a separate matter from any long-term revision of the steel industry, which is to be discussed in tripartite talks in London next week.

Mr Benn is 'shaken' by textile case

Mr Wedgwood Benn, Secretary of State for Industry, said yesterday he had been "very shaken" by the strength of argument used when he met representatives of the textile industry in Manchester.

After spending a working lunch with the executive council of the British Textile Confederation, and meeting Lancashire textile workers and trade union officials, Mr Benn said that the Government were taking very seriously the anxieties expressed.

About 24 textile mills have closed in the past year and thousands of workers are on short time. The workers blame foreign imports and want them cut by the Government.

"I was really very shaken by the strength of language and argument used by the people I met today," Mr Benn said. "They conveyed to me a feeling, as one described it, of inner desperation about the survival of the industry."

"Here is an industry where there has been massive co-operation by the workers over a period of years. There has been a very rapid increase in productivity and a very rapid fall in employment."

"No one could attribute the problems of the industry to those who worked in it," he added.

Speaking about manufacturing generally, Mr Benn said that with the world recession, there was a serious danger that Britain would emerge incapable of meeting the upturn of demand which would come.

CBI members to lobby Mr Wilson on policies

By Malcolm Brown

Rank-and-file members of the Confederation of British Industry are organizing a petition to Mr Wilson, the Prime Minister, giving him a warning that government policies are a direct cause of the collapse of business confidence and urging him to drop "divisive and irrelevant" policies.

The organizers, who hope to recruit many thousands of industrialists to the cause, are aiming to have the petition ready for delivery before the CBI dinner on May 20 at which the Prime Minister is traditionally the chief guest.

Idea for the petition, which originated in Wales, has been taken up by the CBI's 12 regional council chairmen and the confederation's smaller firms council.

Although the CBI is collaborating in the delivery of the petition to Mr Wilson, it was stressed at CBI headquarters yesterday that the move was not a CBI initiative. Since we joined the EEC our company has spent a great deal of money and this has enabled us to quadruple our sales."

A spokesman for the CBI's London headquarters said: "Of our 11,500 member firms, seven have declared themselves in favour of quiting the EEC."

Producers make further copper cuts

By Mervyn Westlake

In a further desperate bid to prop up the price of copper on international markets the four chief producers—Chile, Peru, Zaire and Zambia—will from next Tuesday extend the cutback in their production levels to 15 per cent, reducing exports by a similar amount.

This was announced in Paris yesterday afternoon following a conference of ministers from copper producing countries which have formed an Operative cartel known as CIPEC.

The new producers agreement will increase the scale of the production cutback from the 10 per cent level in force since the end of last year. The move had been widely expected in the copper market and was well received by many traders.

New York dealers said the increased cutback would help reduce supplies of the refined metal that have resulted from the industrialized countries.

However, there was considerable scepticism that the CIPEC action would strengthen copper prices in present circumstances, particularly as the copper industry is approaching the traditional period of low activity.

On the London Metal Exchange the price of copper wire bars closed last night at £553.50 a tonne, having plummeted from a peak of £1,400 a tonne a year ago—but slightly above this year's worst levels of below £500.

Agreement in sight on agenda for energy talks

From Roger Vialvoe, Energy Correspondent, Paris, April 11

After four days of fruitless talks, the long-awaited breakdown on an agenda for a world energy conference was in sight last night.

After being in session for most of the day, the five-day working party formed to speed up the discussions began yet another night session.

With both the industrialized countries and the Third World making concessions on their ideas for the agenda there was for the first time, hope of an agreement.

The two opposing agendas for the world conference have now been combined into a single document containing all the points from the original papers. Compromise has to be reached on the areas where the two differing concepts are in conflict.

A Venezuelan spokesman said he thought the study group was moving to a successful conclusion of the agenda question. While progress had been made, he said, the industrialized countries, represented in the working party by the EEC, had not come all the way to the point where we would want them to be.

Iran, Saudi Arabia, Zaire and Algeria represent the Third World. The Algerians said they were much less pessimistic about the outcome of the conference than they had been this morning.

Agreement on the agenda is a pre-condition for a return to a full session. This would give official consent to the deal and also finalize arrangements on who should be invited to the main conference. Price cut: Saudi Arabian leaders have shown that oil price reduction of 50 cents a barrel and a two-year freeze of crude prices at that level would be "reasonable," according to a diplomatic source in Jeddah.

EEC examining French car parts marketing pacts

From Roger Berthoud, Brussels, April 11

It is reported here that the competition department of the European Commission has been examining arrangements under which the French car manufacturers Renault, Citroën, Peugeot and Simca market spare parts in the EEC.

According to EEC sources, the main object of the investigation has been to discover whether the firms concerned have established a system of rebates and discounts in favour of their own distributors and concessionaires which effectively excludes wholesalers, thus affecting trade between member states.

This could constitute an infringement of Article 85 of the Treaty of Rome, prohibiting any agreements between undertakings which directly or indirectly fix purchase or selling prices or any other trading conditions; limit or share markets; or apply dissimilar conditions to equivalent transactions.

Unions agree to Vauxhall's 'non-inflationary' pay offer

By R. W. Shakespeare

After many weeks of difficult negotiations Vauxhall Motors has concluded a new pay deal with the car unions covering 21,000 manual workers at the company's Luton, Dunstable and Ellesmere Port car and commercial vehicle plants.

The unions agreed at a meeting with the management yesterday to recommend the new pay structure to a series of mass meetings at plant level.

The company has revised its original offer so that total increases ranging from 7.60 to 11.50 per cent for skilled workers, and of £2.80 for unskilled workers. All groups will get further increases in September and next January.

Mr. Geoffrey Moore, Vauxhall's director of labour relations, said that both sides in the negotiations had had to take account of the difficult situation facing the company, the car industry and the country as a whole. They had reached a settlement which would keep earnings in line with the expected increase in the cost of living without being inflationary.

Also, the company has offered an extra payment if the inflation rate at the end of this year exceeds 15 per cent. This could make the total package worth more than £10 a week for most workers.

There will be an immediate increase of £3.40 for skilled workers, of £3.20 for production workers, and of £2.80 for unskilled workers. All groups will get further increases in September and next January.

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Bill excludes marine and air insurance

The board's duties would arise when an insurance company went into liquidation, provided that the liquidation started after October 29, 1974, when the Government's intention to set up a scheme was announced.

Mr. Shore said that the board would use "sparingly" its additional powers to "facilitate the rehabilitation of a company where his department considered that the company might be unable to meet its liabilities towards protected policyholders."

The board might "either arrange for the transfer of business to another company, or give assistance to the company at risk when the necessary changes of management, control or membership have occurred. But it must ensure that, as far as practicable, the existing shareholders will not be benefited."

How the markets moved

FT index: 295.5+1.1
The Times index: 119.70+0.21

Rises

Anna Collis	50p to 440p
Barclays Bk	2p to 232p
BLM	13p to 83p
Chubb & R.	2p to 175p
EW	2p to 100p
Fisons	3p to 325p
Lyons, J. Ord	6p to 140p

Falls

Boots	7p to 281p
Brit Am Tob	2p to 298p
Debenhams	1p to 115p
Enfield	2p to 155p
Glaxo	3p to 270p
Gerrard & Nat	5p to 720p

Lloyds Bk

Magister	4p to 182p
Pearl	10p to 145p
Selection Tst	14p to 150p
Sea Diam	1p to 14p
Trans Can P	15p to 745p
Yule Carto	2p to 25p

Mammion Fin

Peak Inv	5p to 25p
Phillips Lamp	1p to 9p
Reliance Grp	3p to 815p
Silenthire	70p to 430p
Union Discount	15p to 280p
Western Sel	3p to 24p

Equities held steady. Gilt-edged securities remained active and closed with mixed changes. Gold fell by 50 cents to \$172 an oz. Sterling rose by 35 points to \$2.3660. The "effective devaluation" rate was 21.9 per cent. SDR-S was 1.2361 on Friday, while SDR-E was 0.24436. Commodities: Cocoa closed up to £19.00 a metric ton lower yesterday. Reuters' index was just 0.6 higher at 1.08.

Reports, pages 19 and 20

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EDITED BY MARGARET STONE

FINANCIAL NEWS AND MARKET REPORTS

Investor's week

Market eyes sterling • Midland-Yorkshire

Last week's fall in sterling contributed to an uncertain performance in the gilt-edged market and left equities with little to do but keep their heads down until the Budget is out of the way. The FT index, at 295.5 last night, was barely changed over the week.

Good trading results from GKN, Bowater and Harland & Wolff, however, continued to mop up institutional cash, with the £100m plus of equity offers that closed last week appearing to receive a far more favourable response than the £75m loan issue by the GLC.

Crada International may yet have to pay more than the 8.1m, or 360p a share, for Midland-Yorkshire Holdings, which bid near the end of last month.

Just a fortnight ago it looked as if the game was over before it really began. Crada steadily bought the British Gas Corporation 32.6 per cent stake in its bid to add to its existing 56.7 per cent holding.

That Gas Corporation stake was originally intended for operators of Pittsburgh, who agreed to buy it only if no bid was made for Midland-Yorkshire in the meantime.

Next week should see the final Crada offer and Midland-Yorkshire has already moved to counter it. It has offered Hill, Samuel to act on its behalf, and, once the Crada offer is out, we should see a formal reply making several points.

Bill Taylor buys Reckitt & Colman

Enthusiastic, sceptical and apprehensive are all accurate descriptions of Bill Taylor's recent frame of mind as he completes the present stock market scene, with a sense of a more sort possible on Tuesday, a sense that on fundamentals the equity market is probably a high and still expects some trading results. Just as well, he thinks, that the UK is not a quoted index after its 17m loss for the year. The present level of this admittedly reflects the usual pre-Budget jitters, but it rather thinks that the number of deals next Wednesday are more heavily biased towards selling rather than buying, especially if the Chancellor is not enough to ease currency liquidity or open for any substantial degree of deflation.

Any stimulus to the house-holding sector would, of course, help his investment in Reckitt & Colman. But Unilever has been again out by the lack of interest in gold, after the return of the United States interest rate. His expectation that in June July there could be a reversal, pushing the metal back on to the upward end, still holds good, and he has for a while been looking at the \$185 around there and at \$200 fairly soon afterwards.

But what does he do on today morning? He has red with the idea of an option, any taken out now would be the proposed referendum to which will prove a wasted irrespective of the result. A way will, however, be away next month once the implications of the Budget are sunk in.

A neutral Budget seems to be the general expectation in the City and the market will probably be happy enough if that is in fact what Mr Healey proposes. But if he opts for any significant relaxation, this will almost certainly lead to pressure on sterling and gilts.

Last week's fall in gold shares has not changed a generally bullish view of the prospects for the bullion price and United States investors are reported to have been buyers of gold shares in London.

First, Midland-Yorkshire will stress that it is no longer a small way-out in the fashionable specialty chemical business. It will dismiss its 10-year record as irrelevant, and point out that growth now depends on making its products for use in detergents, disinfectants, such as Dettol, and drugs, including the new rheumatism-fighter, Bufen.

Second, it hopes to point out that shareholdings friendly to the board (assuming that is, the bid is not raised) are poised to overtake Crada's own.

Among the institutional holders of Midland-Yorkshire are the National Coal Board and British Assurance. Another holder is a specialty chemical company Robinson Brothers (Rogers Green) which has topped up its stake to 33.3 per cent (40p a share), and once provided Midland-Yorkshire with its chairman.

Thirdly, it should discuss current profits cheerfully, supported by figures showing that they trebled in the six months to September 30. The directors have already promised shareholders a dividend increase for the year to last month from 13.125p a share to 40p.

Finally, the directors seem bound to report that its research chemists and much of the workforce are bitterly opposed to a bid. It has already gone to the Office of Fair Trading and Midland-Yorkshire's application to the office was taken by legal workfolk in a mini-bus on Thursday.

If Midland-Yorkshire and its chairman, Mr. Doctor "Dick" Wallisgrove, who set up the group's research department, can hold their institutional time together, Crada may have to go up to 450p a share. Yesterday's bid buying 100 Midland-Yorkshire shares by 39p to 393p.



Mr. Arthur Mason, chairman of Reckitt & Colman: a high level of overseas earnings.

An alternative is an overseas hedge, particularly of those stocks which do not incur the dollar premium and are largely or, better still, totally immune from the vagaries of the United Kingdom interest rate. Periodically, if such a share can be found, not only is it almost certain to benefit (relatively, anyway) from a release in United Kingdom industrial equities but also gain if the

BILL TAYLOR'S PORTFOLIO: PROGRESS SO FAR

Purchase	Quantity	Date	Buying price	Present price	Profit
Unilever	500	17/2/75	25p	350p	(276)
Hush & Tompkins	1,000	17/3/75	41p	381p	(46)
Realized profit to date					1,678
After costs					782

Motor insurance

If the car is a 'write-off'

Your car should be badly damaged in an accident, you feel that you would never want to drive it again. You would like the insurers to take a car (for what it is worth) for their own use, or to hand over enough money for you to buy comparable replacement. Unfortunately, you will not necessarily get your way. As a rule, you may have to wait a few weeks, without a car, until your own is repaired. Of course, once it is back in your possession, you are free to trade it in if you wish. But, remember that a dealer has to make his "turn" and you will lose out—unless, of course, you would, in any event, have been trading in the car at about that time.

In practice, if a car has had a major repair carried out, it is not as good as a new car, and its post-repair value is very well higher than its pre-repair value.

Normally, a motor policy has clauses along the lines that the insurer's option, either for the cost of repair, replacement, or by cash for the value of the car at the time of the loss.

There are variations. For instance, a few insurers will give a new car value, often giving a slightly higher premium. In this event, the loss is assessed between the insurers and the policyholder at the start of each policy year. The event of total loss, it is value which will be paid, respectively, of the market value of the car at the time of an accident.

As a half-way measure, some insurers say that for the first month in the life of a new car, should the cost of repair, replacement or replacement exceed 50 per cent of the list price, the policyholder can choose to have the car replaced by a new car of the same model in make.

There appears to be no legal provision of a total loss in the field of motor insurance, but insurers generally take this to imply when either the owner is

deprived of it, or it is completely destroyed or so damaged as to lose its identity. But, understandably, an insurance company will treat a car as a total loss (known as a constructive total loss in marine insurance) only if it is extensively damaged and the cost of the repair would equal or exceed its pre-accident market value less its salvage value in its damaged state.

In practice, it is not always easy for an insurance company to estimate exactly how much extensive repairs will cost. But it is up to the insurance company to decide whether to pay for the repairs or pay cash in lieu. Having made the decision, an insurance company cannot reverse it without the policyholder's permission. And so, if a company decides to repair, it is obliged to carry on, even though the final cost may be higher than had been expected.

Most policies still give holders the final word as to where repairs are to be carried out. Generally, however, it is best to fall in with an insurer's wishes about who is to repair the car. This applies particularly in the case of major repairs.

During the past few years, insurers have been interesting themselves to a much greater extent in the repair facilities which are available and they have been encouraging repairers to improve techniques. They now know that repairers are best placed to handle different types of work. An insurer is not concerned solely with the price charged, but in getting a good job of work done for a fair price.

If an insurance company decides to settle a claim on the basis of a total loss, even though the car still has some value and, obviously, probably will be repaired, its obligations are when it pays the pre-accident market value of the car—although there can be plenty of argument about that. It is entitled to take the damaged car as salvage. It can then sell it and retain the proceeds.

It is no longer necessary for the log book of a car to contain any reference to the fact that it has been "written-off" by an insurance company. Even

when there was such a scheme in existence, naturally badly damaged cars were sold by individuals who did not have any insurance in force.

Just because a car which was written off by an insurance company has subsequently been rebuilt it does not necessarily mean that it is a death trap. In many cases, comparatively new cars can be rebuilt to high safety standards. As an example, the insurance industry has its own repair research centre at Thatcham where total losses are rebuilt to very high standards. Often there is a waiting list of people wishing to buy these cars. In view of the extensive checks, in many ways they can be safer than new cars.

A very tiresome habit adopted by many insurers, which there is usually no mention in their policies—is that, after a total loss has been paid, the policy is cancelled, and the replacement car must be the subject of a fresh policy, for which a further 12 months' premium must be paid. The argument—not particularly strong—is that the cover has been "used up". On the other hand, a series of repairs could be carried out during the year following the loss, and there would be no question of automatic termination of the policy.

Nor can it really be argued that fresh insurance is needed since it is a different car, as no problems arise when a car is sold and replaced by another. Nor all companies take this line. Nor long ago, the Financial Times came out into the open, it said that in a total loss settlement insurance is conditional upon the suspension of the cover under the policy; the certificate of insurance also must be returned. The policyholder may then substitute a vehicle without the need for a new policy.

In the period between the total loss and the addition of the new vehicle is at least four weeks, a pro rata return will be calculated on the last net premium. That seems fair, and one hopes that others will follow suit.

JD

Overseas jolt and destocking puts Bond Worth on slide

By Ashley Druker

Tougher going overseas, consumer resistance and massive destocking combined to slice profits of Bond Worth Holdings in the opening half to December 28 from £1.61m to £845,000 pre-tax, in spite of turnover climbing from £37.6m to £40.9m.

The home market remained buoyant but for the "wrong" reasons—inflation keeping up purchasing power. But results for the final phase should be better, says Mr John Murray, chairman of this carpet, rug and furniture group, in which Courtaulds recently raised its stake to nearly 23 per cent. The shares stayed unchanged at 43p.

The "available" dipped from £1.13m to £808,000, and the interim payment is a same again 2.5p. Finance charges rose from £820,000 to £1.22m.

Morgan-Grampian to sell development properties

The Morgan-Grampian publishing group is to dispose of almost all its development properties to Imperial Life Assurance of Canada. The properties are held in two subsidiaries, MGC Securities and MGC Property, which are 24 per cent owned by Imperial Life. Morgan says that as a result of the transactions all the freehold properties held for development will have been sold, although there will be a substantial reduction by the redemption of debentures and the total of net cash received will be £2.2m. The main terms

By December, bank borrowing was already some £500,000 lower than in June, and charges should be much lower in the current half.

Generally, profits were more difficult to earn abroad. The Australian and made a loss of £20,000, while Germany yielded continuing losses in the retail group with an adverse swing of £80,000, and in Ireland by some £108,000.

On the brighter side, wholesale distribution did well as did the traditional carpet manufacturing sector, though the tufted division had a less happy experience. Against this furniture had a "very frustrating" and unprofitable time with a retreat from a profit of £175,000 to a loss of £27,000. The board is in the unexpected delay in bringing the new plant at Letchworth on stream.

Stanwood Radio loss

Short-term finance charges up from £463,000 to £661,000, Stanwood Radio has reported a loss of £1.52m (£1.42m) against £220,000 last year. The comparative profit was £204,000 and before the deduction the trading profit was £2,050,000, against £2.18m. The dividend is paid at 1.1p. The company says first quarter

turnover this time was about one-third higher, but as part of this may be attributable to pre-Budget spending to forecast will be made until the Chancellor's plans are known. Government controls severely restricted the company's television rental and hire-purchase business throughout 1974, but cash sales increased substantially.

John Finlan slump accelerates to loss

Turning in record profits a year ago, John Finlan, pre-tax, has now reported a loss of £1.52m (£1.42m) against £220,000 last year. The comparative profit was £204,000 and before the deduction the trading profit was £2,050,000, against £2.18m. The dividend is paid at 1.1p. The company says first quarter



Mr. Norman Quick, chairman of H. & J. Quick.

Aberthaw closes 18pc down

Profits more than halved at midway (from £603,000 to £242,000 pre-tax), Aberthaw & Bristol Channel Cement pulled up strongly in the last half to finish 18 per cent down at £856,000 pre-tax for 1974.

The interim slide was attributed to a steep rise in the cost of materials, a fall in sales, and delays in price rises. From the first half, when the company had a marked upswing, and after another price rise in September the board looked to a big second-half improvement, subject to the depressed state of the building industry.

Turnover for 1974 was up from £9.4m to £9.8m on net profit fell from £511,000 to £332,000, while earnings a share work out at 13.06p (14.66p). The dividend is unchanged.

Law Land says office demand still buoyant

Estimating that rent increases in 1975 from lifting of restrictions will be some £500,000, Law Land Co in its annual report, says this will be largely absorbed by interest on finance for new developments. Generally, demand for London offices and industrial premises in London and the South-East area remains buoyant, and is likely to continue so.

Mentioning that it is necessary to reappraise activities overseas, the board has confidence in property and investment in Australia and Belgium.

Esso anxiety on North Sea

Esso Petroleum Co is concerned about the impact on its future prospects of the uncertainties besetting the oil industry in Britain says Mr A. W. Pearce, chairman. In his annual report he said the industry's situation was complicated by the Government's proposal to form a State-owned oil company, "with ill-defined responsibilities". The Government had also put forward "a vague concept" of State participation in offshore oil concessions, which "were granted and accepted in good faith on a basis which is no longer applicable".

Mild decline in Nestle profits

Vevey, Switzerland, April 11.—Nestle, Aliments, the world's biggest food combine, has reported a 7.5 per cent fall in group net profit to 742m Swiss francs (£125.8m) from 801m francs.

Group operating profit at 1,445m francs (1,445m) was up from £9.4m to £9.8m on net profit fell from £511,000 to £332,000, while earnings a share work out at 13.06p (14.66p). The dividend is unchanged.

Without incorporated, which covers Nestle's interests in the Western world and the Pacific States, raised its net profit to \$33m from \$16.1m—Reuter.

Epicure omit interim

Losses have continued at the London-based Epicure Holdings— which runs and supplies hotels and restaurants and there is no interim dividend for shareholders.

Turnover went down from £688,500 to £794,000, while a

Stock markets

Long-dated gilts still in retreat

The stock market continued to trade cautiously ahead of the Budget. Gilts again turned in a mixed performance—the shorts holding firm but the long easier once again. Turnover in equities remained thin, and recorded gains totalled only 5,566. The FT index ended 1.1 up at 295.5, following a slightly harder tone in the leading industrial in the final hour of trading.

Short-dated Government stocks managed to log up another small advance, while long-dated issues continued in retreat. In quiet and inactive trading losses of an 1 to 3 point were suffered by "longs" and "mediums". However, money still appeared to be "coming off

The textile trade is awaiting the results for the year to last March from Dawson International with trepidation. At half time shareholders were told of a profits plunge and since then business has been morose. Both second half profits and final dividend are in doubt. The shares are 23p. Dawson normally reports in June.

the street" and "shorts" again benefited from this movement, although to a less marked extent than on Thursday.

By the close "shorts" showed scattered rises of an 1 to 3 point. One of the main features of the day was the new GLC stock (£75m of 12½ per cent 7 years) which was quoted at a discount of between 1 and 1.5, closing at 1 point discount.

In the equity market, many share prices continued to respond to this week's list of company announcements. In their ex-rights form, shares in Tube Investments dipped to 214p (after 216p), while the "rights" themselves were at a premium of 25p. On the same pitch, Babcock & Wilcox (at 92p) was again a firm spot as the market responded to the profits news and move to sell off the German associate to Iran.

A flurry of buying lifted shares in BLMC to 44p, the best. GKN, a major supplier to the motor trade, closed a few pence easier at 210p.

One of the few sectors to take up a fresh stance ahead of the Budget were tobacco. Several brokers are warning their clients that Tuesday could bring a further rise in tobacco. Shares in Bata (289p),

Rothmans International (24p) and Imps (59p) shaded lower. But ICI (220p), Bowater (118p), Courtaulds (108p) and Unilever (335p) closed at or near to overnight levels after a nervy if thin day's trade.

A feature elsewhere were shares in Midland-Yorkshire Holdings, after the board's firm rejection of bid terms from Crada International, together with a promise of an updated profits estimate and a further dividend payment.

Financial shares were quietly firm, with insurance issues finding takers. In Oils, Burnah Oil dipped to a low of 34p after press disclosure of the prediction that tanker losses could finally total £17m by the end of 1982. BP (343p) was steady but Shell dipped 10p to 222p.

Gold shares started well but drifted down later as buying support failed. But final losses in most producers were restricted to 50p or so. President

Shares in Selection Trust put on 20p to 515p after a review in the investment press of the group's base metal deposits in the Canada.

Steyn unchanged at £174 found buyers at the close. Equity turnover on April 10, to £42.1m (12,292 bargains). Active shares yesterday according to Exchange Telegraph were ICI, Burnham Oil, Tubes, Thorn "A", Midland Bank, Cons Goldfield, Shell, Plessey, y in Beecham and Babcock & Wil-

Latest dividends

All dividends in new pence or appropriate currencies

Company	Div	Year	Pay date	Year's	Prev
Aberthaw & Bristol (25p) Fin	7.46	7.46	7.46	7.46	7.46
Standard Oil (10p) Fin	2.5	2.5	29/5	3.8	3.73
Brit Empire (21p) Int	0.21	0.20	7/5	0.73	0.73
CH Industrials (10p) Fin	1.74	1.74	—	2.3	2.47
Epicure (5p) Int	Nil	0.12	14/8	0.96	0.83
Horace Cory (5p) Fin	0.64	0.64	—	Nil	7.2
John Finlan (10p) Fin	4.7	4.7	—	Nil	0.39
Mexu Group (5p) Int	0.43	0.39	1/7	0.43	0.39
B. & J. Quick (5p) Fin	0.4	0.37	—	Nil	1.09
Stanwood Radio (10p) Fin	Nil	0.57	—	Nil	3
Bond Worth (25p) Int	2.5	2.5	23/7	—	—

Brokers' views

The calmness with which the City awaits what is generally expected to be a "neutral Budget" is well reflected in the week's batch of investment views.

Expectations in the stock market of a public sector net borrowing movement of as much as £8,000m are referred to by both Simon & Coates and Rowe & Pitman. But the two differ in prediction of reaction in the gilt-edged market to such news. Rowe & Pitman thinks it likely that gilts will take flight if the borrowing requirements in Western Areas, East Drie-

Simon thinks such a possibility is well discounted.

Phillips & Drew agrees with several other stockbrokers in predicting a mildly deflationary Budget, with moves to channel income from the personal sector to companies. The likelihood of higher duty on tobacco, cigarettes and perhaps petrol is also expected by a number of sources.

Against last week's trend in the gold share market, Sternberg, Thomas Clarke recommends that any equity portfolio should include perhaps 15 per cent in gold shares. It favours Consolidated Goldfields, Charter Consolidated and Selection Trust, or among the producers, Western Areas, East Drie-

INTERIM STATEMENT

BOND WORTH HOLDINGS LIMITED

INTERIM STATEMENT

Six months ended 28th December, 1974

	Six months to 28th December, 1974	Six months to 29th December, 1973
Turnover	40,866,000	37,567,000
Operating Profit	2,337,000	2,688,000
Depreciation	268,000	255,000
Trading Profit	2,069,000	2,433,000
Finance Charges	1,224,000	820,000
Profit before Taxation	845,000	1,613,000
Associated Companies	—	1,000
	845,000	1,614,000
Taxation	33,000	475,000
	812,000	1,139,000
Minority Interest	(4,000)	(10,000)
Profit available for Distribution	808,000	1,129,000

As anticipated in my statement circulated with the Annual Report and Accounts, the first half of the current year was one in which turnover continued to increase, but profits were lower. Although trading profit (£2,069,000) was up by 91% (£198,000) on the previous six months (£1,871,000), it was down by 15% (£364,000) on the same period last year (£2,433,000). Profit before taxation (£845,000) was down only 15% (£145,000) on the previous six months (£990,000) but was 43% (£768,000) down on the same period last year (£1,613,000). The major distortion in the figures was caused by the growth in increasingly costly borrowing which was caused primarily by the uncontrolled scramble for scarce raw materials which occurred in the first half of 1974, owing to external economic circumstances outside our control, the consequences of which peaked during the period under review. By December, however, bank borrowing was almost £500,000 lower than in June and with this trend continuing, and falling interest rates, we expect finance charges to be significantly lower during the current six months.

Profits were more difficult to achieve overseas, where tough anti-inflationary policies have produced high unemployment, reduction in consumer spending and massive destocking within the distribution system. Our Australian company, as anticipated, had a particularly difficult time, swinging adversely £308,000 from profits of £229,000 in the same period last year to a loss of £79,000, £133,000 of this loss was an automatic consequence of the devaluation of the Australian dollar. Germany, with consumer demand screwed down by Government policy, yielded continuing losses in our retail group with an adverse swing of £80,000. Our companies in Ireland, with inflation rampant and a continuing political situation hardly conducive to consumer confidence, swung adversely by £109,000.

The home market, again as anticipated, remained buoyant, albeit for the wrong reasons. Indisputably controlled inflation kept purchasing power up. Our wholesale distribution division did well, as did our traditional carpet manufacturing sector. The tufted sector had a less satisfactory experience, partly owing to widespread distress selling of frustrated exporters but even more owing to deteriorate competition developing in printed tufted, as more and more excess capacity came on stream. Happily we did not invest significantly in this system of pattern production but the consequences of excess capacity in any sector invariably have some adverse repercussions in prices in general.

The furniture division had a very frustrating and unprofitable time, with an adverse swing of £202,000 from a profit in the same period last year of £175,000 in a loss of £27,000. This poor result was caused, very largely, by unexpected delays in bringing the extensive and complex new automated plant at Letchworth on stream. During the period also a disastrous fire gutted our new upholstery factory at Hitchurch. None of these problems was made any more palatable by the fact that we badly needed the production to satisfy sales demand.

Overall results for the current six months should be better. We obtained record orders at the Frankfurt International Fair and export markets in general are beginning to recover. The tufted carpet manufacturing sector is showing promise, the traditional carpet manufacturing sector continues to maintain excellent results, the wholesale division is making its usual steady contribution to profit and the furniture line now beginning to flow according to plan, should make profits of about £250,000 during this period.

We propose to pay an interim dividend of 1.675p (pence) per share for the half year ended 28th December, 1974. The dividend will be paid on 23rd July, 1975 to shareholders on the register at the close of business on 20th June, 1975.

JOHN T. MURRAY, Chairman.

11th April, 1975.

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48" x 12" x 12" 5-sh	£7.50
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70" x 12" x 6" 5-sh	£7.00
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